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Eng<sup>d</sup> by A. H. Ritchie

MAJOR GENERAL E. R. S. CANBY

HISTORY  
OF THE  
CAMPAIGN OF MOBILE;

INCLUDING THE COÖPERATIVE OPERATIONS

OF

GEN. WILSON'S CAVALRY IN ALABAMA.

BY

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LATE COMMANDING THE SECOND DIVISION, THIRTEENTH ARMY CORPS, U. S. VOLS.

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WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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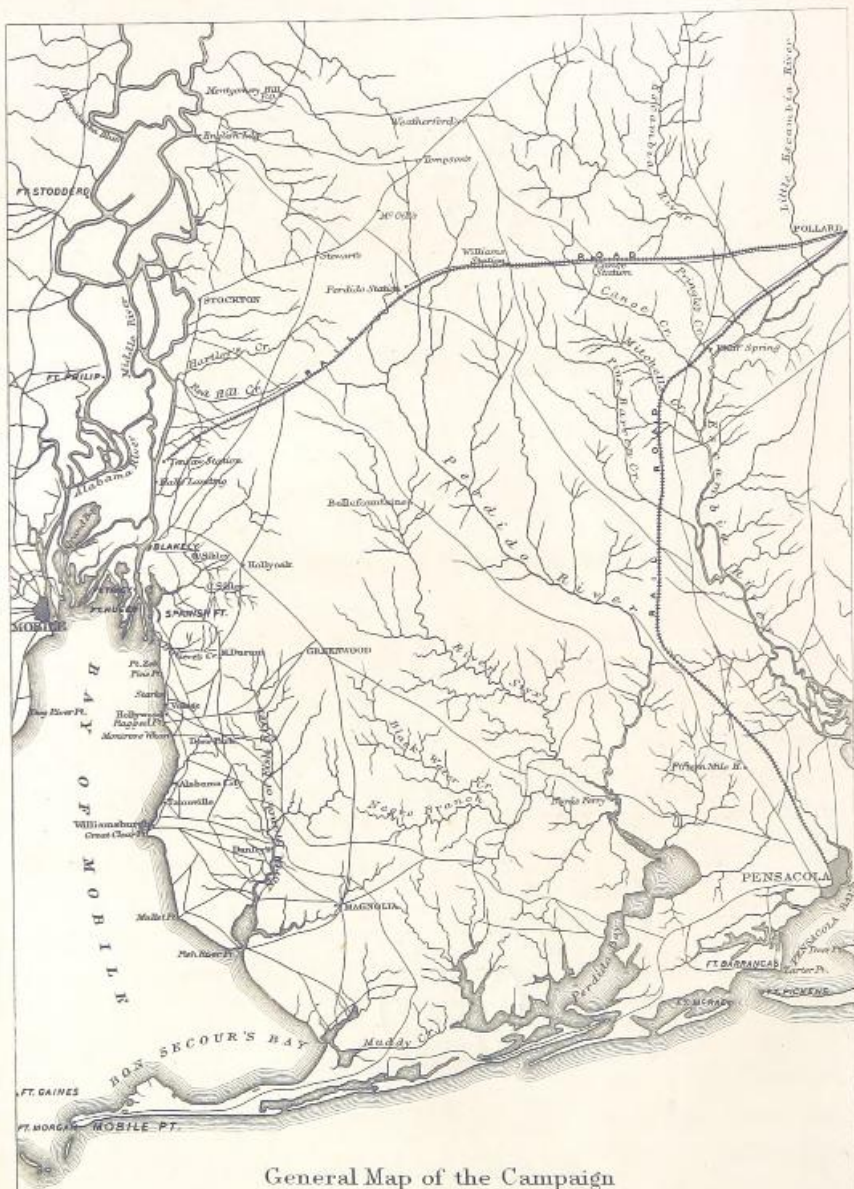
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# HISTORY

OF THE

## CAMPAIGN OF MOBILE.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### MOBILE—ITS FORTIFICATIONS.

MOBILE, at the commencement of the war, contained a population of thirty thousand. It is situated on low ground, at the mouth of Mobile river—formed by the Alabama and Tombigbee—and at the head and western shore of the bay bearing the same name.

Having communication the year round, by rivers as well as by railroads, into the heart of Alabama and Mississippi, it was regarded as one of the keys of the Confederacy.

Socially, politically, and commercially, except that its commerce was smaller, it resembled New Orleans; and between the cities there was considerable cordiality. The liberalizing influence of commerce had tended to foster a fraternal and national spirit, and it was among the last Southern cities to renounce the Union. Douglas had been welcomed there with enthusiasm in 1860, and received a large vote in the presidential election.

After the passage of the ordinance of secession, it was deemed essential that the orator Yancey should visit Mobile



to reconcile the people to the new government. He urged, among other things, that, under the Confederacy, their commerce would take more ample wings; and that the only danger to be dreaded would be the excess of wealth and luxury which would follow.

But once committed to the confederate cause, the people were active and zealous in contributing to its success. They cheerfully rendered military service, and gave the labor of their slaves in constructing defensive works. These being carried on with skill and industry, grew more formidable every year. They tended to avert attack, and gave the city the distinction of being the last important place in the Confederacy which was captured.

Once, only, did the people murmur. West of the city, on rising ground, was a fine forest of oak and evergreen. Drives through it afforded pleasant refuge from the tropic heat of the town; and thither excursions were made in the long summer for relaxation. The engineer decided that this forest must be cut down, and it was done. But the citizens made indignant complaints on account of it.

*Fortifications of Mobile.*—Gen. Joseph E. Johnston pronounced Mobile to be the best-fortified place in the Confederacy. The first continuous line of earthworks around the city was made in 1862, under Capt. Lieurner, about three miles out from the business streets, and comprised fifteen redoubts. This line was, for the most part, upon ground about one hundred feet higher than the city.

After the fall of Vicksburgh, the apprehension of an attack stimulated the defensive operations, and the year 1863 witnessed the completion, by Gen. Leadbetter, of a second line of works, built nearer the city, and in fact passing through the suburbs. It included sixteen enclosed and strong forts. This rendered the defences so formidable that it was estimated a

garrison of ten thousand effective troops could hold the city ninety days against a besieging army of forty thousand.

Another and still stronger line of works was constructed in 1864, about halfway between the other two. This line, built by Lieut.-Col. V. Sheliha, included nineteen heavy bastioned forts and eight redoubts. The parapets of these forts were from twenty to thirty feet thick, the ditches about twenty feet deep, and thirty feet or thereabouts in width.

*Harbor Fortifications.*—Nor were the works ordinary which had been prepared to resist an attack by water. Just below the city were ten batteries to sweep the channel. Two of these were floating. Long rows of piles had been driven to obstruct the channel; and though an opening was here and there left through which vessels might cautiously pass, yet they would almost have to hug the muzzles of heavy guns which at every such outlet threatened destruction. Such were the obstacles on the Spanish river channel, the usual route.

On the eastern shore of the bay vessels could pass up the Appalachee river and come round through the Tensas, arriving in front of Mobile, clear of the obstructions before mentioned. But to close this route Batteries Huger and Tracy had been built on low ground close to the river, and piles had also been driven across the channel; and in different parts of the bay many torpedoes had been planted.

But the principal barrier against attack by water, up to the summer of 1864, had been Forts Morgan and Gaines. These imposing walled forts stood at the entrance of the bay, four miles apart, and afforded protection to blockade-runners. They had been built by the United States, but were seized and taken possession of by the confederates as early as January, 1861.

Fort Gaines was built in star-fashion, mounting thirty guns, and garrisoned by nine hundred men. Fort Morgan was built on a grander scale, armed with sixty powerful guns, and had a

water battery in its front. Besides these was Fort Powell, near Cedar point, built to command Grant's pass—an inconsiderable and incomplete work, and mounting only eight guns. In the channel in front of Fort Morgan, and not more than a mile distant from it, four hundred torpedoes had been planted. But the current there is strong, and only one of them was ever known to cause any damage.

Thus was Mobile hemmed about with grim preparations against an adversary. And besides these fortifications, there was no inconsiderable confederate navy lurking in the harbor. The ram Tennessee, that afterward made a frightful dash at the Hartford, and the gunboats Gaines, Morgan, Selma, and other vessels, had by their menacing attitude created some apprehension of an attempt to raise the blockade; and the federal government felt the necessity of Farragut's presence there. He was therefore ordered to resume command of the western gulf squadron, which he did; and arrived off Mobile on the 18th of January, 1864.



## CHAPTER II.

### EARLIER OPERATIONS AGAINST MOBILE.

ASSUMING that the Red river expedition would be successful, Grant, on the 31st of March, 1864, in a despatch to Banks, expressed the opinion that after reserving a force sufficient to guard the Mississippi river he (Banks) would have left, according to the last returns, a force of over thirty thousand effective men with which to move against Mobile; to which he expected to add five thousand men from Missouri. "If, however," he continued, "you think the force here stated too small to hold the territory regarded as necessary to hold possession of, I would say concentrate at least twenty-five thousand men of your present command for operations against Mobile, with these and such other additions as I can give you from elsewhere lose no time in making a demonstration, to be followed by an attack on Mobile."

The reverses along the Red river prevented these instructions from being carried into effect. Gen. Canby assumed command of the military division of West Mississippi on the 11th of May. He brought with him instructions to carry out, if possible, the contemplated movement against Mobile. But the recent success of the confederates west of the Mississippi increased their spirit so much that they at once assumed the aggressive. Kirby Smith's combined forces did not fall much short of sixty thousand men. He threatened several points on the Mississippi and the whole line of the Arkansas. It was necessary, therefore, to postpone the contemplated operations against Mobile, all the

movable forces being required to guard the Mississippi. It had been contemplated also to renew operations on Red river, but Canby became satisfied that the troops could be used to better advantage east of the Mississippi. He was also called on to send six thousand men of the Nineteenth corps by sea from New Orleans to Washington when the latter place was threatened, and the movement being executed with promptitude and secrecy they reached there at a most opportune moment.

But although the federal army was yet unable to assail Mobile, that place was destined to receive a tremendous blow from the navy, in the reduction of those frowning citadels that guarded the bay and harbor. Farragut's heroic and magnificent naval engagement with Forts Morgan and Gaines and the confederate monitors, on the 5th of August, 1864, is a familiar and memorable event, and some mention of it should here be made including the operations of the land forces. On that day, Fort Powell was blown up and evacuated; on the 8th, Fort Gaines surrendered with its garrison, and on the 23d, the federal ensign was once more hoisted over Fort Morgan.

*Bombardment and Siege of Forts Morgan and Gaines.*—At eleven o'clock of the night of August 2, Gen. Gordon Granger arrived off Santa Rosa Island, with fifteen hundred effective men, consisting of the Seventy-seventh Illinois, Thirty-fourth Iowa, Ninety-sixth Ohio, Third Maryland dismounted cavalry, and Cobb's colored regiment of engineers, the whole under the immediate command of Brig.-Gen. McGinnis. After Granger had consulted with Admiral Farragut, the troops, on the 3d, moved up to Dauphine island, and effected a landing before dark. They immediately moved forward toward a clearing in the woods, ten miles distant. By dark a heavy rain set in. The gunboats shelled the woods, and, amidst the thick darkness and thunder-storm, the march was slow. Three times the skirmish line got in rear of the main column. Finally, at



midnight, weary and drenched to the skin, the column halted and sank down on the sand to await morning. Then myriads of mosquitoes commenced their attack; but the men, being literally exhausted by such a march, fell asleep. In the morning the march was resumed; the confederate skirmishers were soon met, but made little resistance, and at ten, A. M., the column came in sight, and within two miles of Fort Gaines. At the edge of the woods a line was formed, and reserve breast-works constructed of fallen trees. On the 4th, the skirmishers were within half a mile of the fort, and intrenchments were commenced. The guns from Fort Gaines did some shelling, and the skirmish fire on both sides was lively, but the casualties were light.

The morning of the 5th was clear and cloudless. The confederate guns opened briskly at sunrise. It was the morning Farragut had promised his gallant seamen and marines, "they should breakfast in Mobile bay."

At six o'clock, the fleet of some fourteen splendid vessels, with slow and stately pace, steamed toward Fort Morgan. Farragut, as is well known, had taken post in the main rigging of the flagship, Hartford. The Tecumseh, being in the lead, fired the first shot. Ten minutes afterward, both forts opened on the fleet. About the same time the Tecumseh struck a torpedo, and the gallant Craven and his devoted crew—about one hundred and twenty souls—found a watery grave. A momentary shudder pierced the breast of every beholder. Ten were rescued by the bravery of Acting Ensign H. C. Nields and boat's crew from the Metacomet, within six hundred yards of the fort, under a galling fire. Every gun that could be brought to bear from the ships was constantly served. In the beginning, Fort Morgan itself seemed a wall of fire, but in a few moments was obscured by smoke. As the Tecumseh sank, the flagship rushed forward and took the lead. The shock, the

dread clamor, of that cannonading—its sharp concussion and loudly reverberating roar, defy description. Amid the tempest of battle, Farragut, from his elevated position, calmly surveyed the whole scene. One hour of intense excitement—one hour of straining toil at the guns—and the fleet passed the fort and entered the bay. Then the confederate navy—the ram Tennessee, the Morgan, Gaines, and Selma—opened fire. The Metacomet gave chase to the Selma, and in an hour captured her and her crew of ninety officers and men. The Morgan escaped up the bay; the Gaines, disabled, sought shelter under the guns of Fort Morgan. The iron ram Tennessee, like a monstrous thing of life, stood up with threatening aspect for the Hartford. Seeing this, Farragut signalled the monitors, and wooden vessels best adapted, to attack her, not only with their guns, but bows on at full speed. For two hours the struggle was desperate and fearful. The ironclads grappled fiercely with their huge antagonist, and the wooden vessels, with romantic valor, bore down on her invulnerable sides. Finally, the Manhattan, with a XV-inch shot, penetrated her armor, and a shot from a monitor in her steering apparatus rendered her helpless. The white flag appeared, and twenty officers and one hundred and seventy men were surrendered. Her loss was eight or ten killed and wounded, her admiral, Buchanan, being seriously wounded. The loss in the federal navy that morning was fifty-two killed and one hundred and seventy wounded.

The fleet now washed up their bloody decks and rested. Meantime the siege of Fort Gaines continued. On the 6th, the land forces mounted two thirty-pounder Parrotts and four twelve-pounder rifles, and prepared works for more guns. About five, P. M., one of the monitors steamed up and dropped several shells into the fort. Apprehending what might follow, the commander of the garrison, Col. Anderson, inquired of Ad-



miral Farragut on what terms he would receive the surrender of the fort.

The 7th was occupied in arranging terms and making out rolls of men to be surrendered.

At nine, A. M., of the 8th, Fort Gaines was unconditionally surrendered, and large quantities of ammunition and supplies were turned over in good condition. The confederate loss in killed and wounded had not exceeded ten, and the federal land forces lost only two killed. Among the latter was Corporal Grey, of the Thirty-fourth Iowa.

The prisoners—nine hundred—were immediately embarked for New Orleans, and the besiegers regaled themselves with the best meal they had had since arriving on Dauphine island—corn-dodgers, fried bacon, and coffee.

*Siege of Fort Morgan.*—On the 9th, at daylight, Granger's command, now reinforced by the Twentieth Wisconsin, Thirty-eighth Iowa, and Ninety-fourth Illinois, embarked for Navy cove, four miles down the peninsula from Fort Morgan, on the bay side, with a view to besiege that fort. The commander of Fort Morgan then caused the gunboat Gaines to be burned, and also the hospital and other buildings outside of the fort. After landing, the troops moved forward, and that night lay on their arms two miles from the fort.

On the 10th, they advanced, and the Thirty-fourth Iowa, being on the skirmish line, got within six hundred yards of the fort without drawing fire, the garrison keeping quiet and expecting an assault. Slight advances were made each night, and intrenchments dug in the sand, till the skirmishers were within two hundred yards of the fort. Occasionally a monitor would steam up, and throw one-hundred and two-hundred-pound shells into the fort, but the replies from the latter seemed ineffective against their iron sides; though, in the arma-

ment of the fort, were several Armstrong and Whitney guns, and one Whitworth.

A siege-train having previously arrived, under Gen. Richard Arnold, by the 21st, the land forces had twenty-five cannon and sixteen mortars in position. The mortars were behind a heavy parapet four hundred yards from the fort, and manned by men of the Thirty-eighth Iowa. The guns were in redoubts, and manned by companies of the First Indiana heavy artillery and a detachment of sailors from the fleet, the naval battery being commanded by Lieut. Tyson, of the Hartford. The troops were subjected to severe toil in constructing works in the sand; and were day and night exposed to a searching fire from the fort.

*The Bombardment.*—At daylight on the 22d, a gun from a monitor gave the signal for a general bombardment. At nine, A. M., the whole fleet was in line of battle and the firing continued with unabated fury. From seven to nine, P. M., it was slow and irregular; but at half past nine, P. M., a fire was discovered breaking out in the fort, and the firing was then intensely renewed to prevent extinguishment. Six or eight mortar shells could be counted in the air at once; and every shot appeared to take effect. Nor in the midst of this destructive shower was the garrison moved by any weak fears. When the fire broke out they exposed themselves to extinguish it, and threw ninety thousand pounds of powder into the cisterns. Between forty and fifty had been killed or wounded. One man had been blown eighty feet into the air by the explosion of a shell. The interior of the fort had become a mass of smouldering ruins; there was not a space five feet square which had not been defaced by shell. Many of the guns had been shattered into pieces by solid shot and shells.

The garrison did not reply to the fleet during the bombardment. They attempted, however, to use some of their guns on



the land batteries but were prevented by sharpshooters. Their own sharpshooters were somewhat troublesome to the besiegers; but the latter during the operations had only five men wounded.

The firing continued at intervals all night, and at six, A. M., on the 23d, a white flag appeared on the parapet of the fort, and the garrison was formally surrendered at half past two, P. M.

The Twentieth Wisconsin and Thirty-fourth Iowa were designated on the part of the land forces to receive the surrender. When the prisoners had been marched out and the confederate flag was taken down, the confederate general, Page, was affected to tears. But good humor and mirth prevailed among the men. The besiegers had used mules in hauling up their guns. The confederate pickets, seeing this and giving the animals credit for longer ears than they really had, had been free in expressions of derision at such a battery. And now the besiegers were returning the raillery.

Such is an epitome of the operations which contributed uncommon renown to the naval history of the republic. The land forces engaged were proud and joyous in having a small share in so much glory.

The federal fleet now having control of Mobile bay put a stop to blockade-running. It was given out and generally believed that Mobile could be taken at pleasure. But it was hardly so, nor was any further movement made. The confederates hastened to strengthen their defences nearer the city, and built the works known as Spanish fort on the eastern shore.

The bay having been strewn with torpedoes Farragut commenced the process of removing them, and on the 13th of September reported that twenty-one had been taken up.

A demonstration was made against Mobile the following December by a small column of infantry under Gen. Granger, moving from Pascagoula. It reached Grand bay twenty-two miles from the city, and then returned. At the same time a

column of cavalry under Gen. Davidson, from Baton Rouge, struck, but did not cross, the Pascagoula river; and another column of cavalry under Gen. Grierson was moving southeasterly from Memphis.

If the condition of affairs in Mobile had been known to the federal commander at the time Fort Powell was evacuated, August 5th, he could then have cheaply captured the place. There were then no troops in nor immediately about the city—the artillery even having been called away to oppose Gen. A. J. Smith's column then advancing from Memphis. And after the fight with him at Harrisburgh the same troops were ordered to West Point, Georgia, to support Gen. Hood, so that the federal forces, if moved through Grant's pass in light-draught steamers, thence up Dog river to Dog river factory, and there disembarked, could have marched into the city with scarcely any resistance—demonstrations being made at the same time by the fleet upon the batteries in front of the city.<sup>1</sup> But it would, of course, have been necessary to reinforce Gen. Granger's small command to at least eight thousand men to enable him to hold the city successfully for a great length of time. In twenty days Gen. Maury had collected such a garrison of confederate troops as would have required the federals to resort to the slow process of a siege.

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. D. H. Maury's Report, Mobile Times, Mar. 11, 1866.

## CHAPTER III.

### CONCENTRATION, ORGANIZATION, AND EQUIPMENT OF THE ARMY.

A CAMPAIGN and its plan being determined on, there needs to be on the part of the leader a foresight which includes everything, and a care that never sleeps, to secure for the army the proper supply of material, the best equipment, the utmost efficiency; so that it can at any moment take advantage of its success, or if it meet with reverses that it shall not be overcome.

That operations should be undertaken against Mobile was decided early in January, 1865; but the plan was not arranged till some time afterward.

The troops designated for the campaign had to be moved by water from posts above New Orleans to the vicinity of Mobile bay—some point on which would be the base; and as the transportation required sea and gulf vessels, whose number and capacity were less than river transports, this preliminary movement required considerable time.

Canby's movable forces had lately been organized into brigades of the "Reserve Corps of the Military Division of the West Mississippi," comprising about ten thousand effectives. They had formed a part of the Thirteenth corps at Vicksburgh, and more recently had belonged to the Nineteenth corps. One brigade was at Devall's Bluff, Arkansas, and the remainder were stationed along the Mississippi from Memphis down. Early in January they were concentrated at Kenner, ten miles above New Orleans, and Major-Gen. F. Steele was assigned to their command, with instructions to have them fitted for a cam-



paign. They were troops which had been well tried on many occasions, and were in all respects such as any commander would be proud of. Here they remained about three weeks. Their camp lay outside of the levee, stretched along for four miles, and the ground was actually lower than the surface of the river. The weather was like September along the St. Lawrence, but there was considerable rain, and the ground being much of the time wet and muddy the men could hardly be comfortable. Nevertheless, in pursuance of Gen. Steele's orders, some time was spent each day, when the weather admitted, in drill—principally in the manual of arms.

What the campaign was to be, whether against Mobile or into Texas, was not yet known even by Gen. Steele. But a portion of the troops being ordered to Barrancas, Florida, it appeared the former must be the objective point.

About the 23d of January, Gen. Canby received information leading to a suspicion that an attempt would be made by the confederates to regain possession of Barrancas or some other point thereabouts on the gulf.

On the afternoon of that day a despatch was received at Kenner for the commander of the Third brigade of the reserve to report immediately in person at the headquarters of the military division, New Orleans; and complying therewith before dark, he received written instructions to proceed with the detachment of his brigade then at Kenner to East Pascagoula, and was enjoined to use despatch. Transportation was not then entirely ready. Yet the next day the regiments had all embarked with their equipage. The Twenty-fourth Indiana proceeded on the Corinthian round through the mouth of the river and the gulf.

By dusk the Thirty-fourth Iowa, and One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio, had landed at New Orleans; whence they proceeded by rail to Lake Pontchartrain in detachments—the cars being insufficient to take an entire regiment. Arriving there in

the middle of a dark and windy night, they rapidly moved their stores and teams over the long wharf—which in many places was so rotten that some of the animals broke through—took their wagons to pieces and loaded them and the equipage on steamers, making the fourth time their luggage had been handled in twenty-four hours. At daylight, the 26th, they reported to Gen. Granger, at East Pascagoula, and were by him ordered to Barrancas, in accordance with previous instructions from Gen. Canby. They arrived at Barrancas at daylight, the 27th, and debarked and went into camp. The remainder of the brigade arrived on the 1st of February; and it was there in camp six weeks.

It may interest the reader to know how troops spend such a period of time immediately preceding a campaign. But first let us take a view of their surroundings; likewise of their camp.

The natural appearance of that part of the country is unattractive. Barrancas is a narrow and sandy peninsula, a third part covered with pine openings, with here and there clusters of live oaks. Along the shore the sand is white, and on a raw day creates the illusion of snow.

The fort which gives the place its name was originally built by the Spaniards, about two centuries ago, and with Fort Pickens, which is opposite, helps to guard the entrance into the splendid harbor of Pensacola. On the southeastern side of the peninsula are the ruins of the Pensacola navy-yard; and surrounding that are the villages of Woolsey and Warrington. From the landing at Barrancas the ground rises slightly for a mile, and then declines to a bayou on the north side. On the higher ground was located the camp of the brigade. Its front was along the edge of the pine wood, and near was a small clear stream.

*The Camp at Barrancas.*—The brigade was camped in the following order from right to left, the regiments having taken position as they happened to arrive, rather than according to rank: The Twenty-fourth Indiana (veteran), consolidated with



the Sixty-seventh, Col. W. T. Spicely; the Thirty-fourth Iowa, consolidated with the Thirty-eighth, Col. G. W. Clark; the One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio, consolidated with the One Hundred and Twentieth, Col. J. H. Kelly; the Eighty-third Ohio, consolidated with the Forty-eighth (veteran), Col. F. W. Moore; the Sixty-ninth Indiana, Lieut.-Col. O. Perry; and the Ninety-seventh Illinois, Lieut.-Col. V. Vifquain. Some time afterward, the Seventy-sixth Illinois, Col. S. F. Busey, arrived, and, being attached to the brigade, took position on the left.

It is a saying among the volunteers, that the more pleasant their camp is made, the sooner will they be called upon to leave it. However much or little this thought influenced these regiments, they certainly, in a very few days, made a beautiful and attractive camp. It was laid out with five streets to a regiment, with tents for two companies on a street, the companies facing. Small evergreen trees were cut and hauled to the camp, and set in rows on each side of every street, and in front of every tent. Handsome arbors were made, and artificial groves before the officers' tents; and especially around the hospital tents, which, however, were but few in number and had but few inmates. Walks were neatly arranged, having their margins adorned with shrubbery, handsome shells, and devices moulded from the white sand. Guns, mortars, shields, cannon-balls, and other warlike implements were ingeniously carved in this sand, with, here and there, a felicitous motto or inscription. Its cleanliness corresponded with the taste and industry displayed in ornamenting it.

These soldiers were some of the best young men of the West, and had the characteristics of proud and gallant men, as one could plainly see who noticed them off duty in their familiar and joyous groups around the camp. The plates on their accoutrements were kept brightly polished, and their muskets and accoutrements always neat. Two hours in the forenoon they

spent in company drill, devoting considerable attention to the manual of arms and to target practice ; and two hours of the afternoon were devoted to brigade drill. The ground on which these drills took place was a mile north of Fort Barrancas. The field officers met evenings in the school of the brigade ; and the exercises of the brigade in the field were eminently successful. As these battalions moved with so much precision and beauty, closed in mass, or rapidly deployed, or advanced in line of battle in double-quick on the charge, their bayonets glittering and their alignment grandly preserved, no observer could doubt—remembering they had been through many battles—that these were rehearsals for no common event.

As transportation could be furnished, the greater portion of the other brigades of the Reserve corps moved from Kenner to Fort Gaines. On the 18th of February, the Reserve corps, with the addition of seven regiments, namely, the Twenty-ninth and Thirty-third Iowa, Fiftieth Indiana, Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, and Thirty-fifth Wisconsin, and Seventy-seventh Ohio, which had been sent down from the department of Arkansas ; and several light batteries, were organized as the Thirteenth corps, comprising three divisions, and Major-Gen. Gordon Granger assigned to its command.

The Sixteenth army corps, commanded by Major-Gen. A. J. Smith, having taken a prominent part in the two days' battle of Nashville, and in the pursuit of Hood's army, was, early in February, at Eastport, Mississippi. The roads rendering it impracticable for a further movement south with heavy trains, orders were sent by Grant to have this corps move round and report to Canby. Accordingly, on the 5th and 6th of February, a fleet of forty-three river steamboats and seven tow-boats with barges, appeared at Eastport, and taking aboard the Sixteenth corps and five thousand of Wilson's cavalry, with horses, on the 7th, moved down the Tennessee to the Ohio, thence into



the Mississippi. In eight days it arrived at Vicksburgh, where, in pursuance of orders, the cavalry disembarked. But an unfortunate blunder in transmitting a telegraphic despatch, caused the Sixteenth corps also to land and go into camp. But Gen. Smith, having orders in his pocket for his corps to move to New Orleans, hastened down the river to the nearest telegraphic station, and, communicating with Gen. Canby, had the matter corrected, and returned to Vicksburgh for his corps. Four days were thus lost. Re-embarking, the Sixteenth corps reached the suburbs of New Orleans on the 21st, having moved thirteen hundred and thirty-five miles in eleven days of actual travel. It then remained some days on the low, wet ground, a few of the regiments occupying Jackson's battle-field. By the 7th of March it had arrived at Fort Gaines.

About the same time, Hawkins' colored division, five thousand five hundred strong, arrived at Barrancas. Ten days later, Lucas' brigade of cavalry arrived at the same place, and the column forming there had been placed under the command of Gen. Steele.

The siege-train was being organized at Fort Gaines, and consisted of the seven batteries of the First Indiana, and "A" and "K" of the Sixth Michigan (heavy) artillery, and Mack's Eighteenth New York.

The main army was now encamped on Dauphine island, in the vicinity of Fort Gaines, under shelter-tents.

Inspections were frequent, to the end that deficiencies in clothing and equipments might be supplied and all surplus articles be dispensed with. The troops received new clothing, to make their supply complete.

Canby's orders to perfect the organization, equipment, and mobility of the army, were most thorough, and may be studied

with profit by those who shall hereafter undertake campaigns; by all, indeed, who follow the profession of arms.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> HEADQUARTERS,

GENERAL ORDERS, }	MILITARY DIVISION OF WEST MISSISSIPPI,
No. 15. }	NEW ORLEANS, LA., <i>February 5th</i> , 1865.

1. The following extracts from General Orders, No. 4, series of 1864, from these headquarters, relating to troops in the field, and to reserve forces held in readiness for field service, are hereby republished for careful consideration and for strict observance in spirit and in letter :

“All details from these troops, for extra or special service at posts, depots, or hospitals, will at once be relieved, and the men sent to their regiments and companies, their places being supplied, as far as practicable, by hired men or non-effectives. The number of clerks, orderlies, &c., will be reduced whenever it is practicable. . . . .

“Recruits and convalescents for organizations that are in the field, or designated for field service, will be forwarded as rapidly as possible. Efficiency and mobility will be secured by rejecting everything not essential to these conditions. The clothing issued will be limited to the suit the soldier wears, a change of underclothing, and an extra pair of shoes. Coats will not be issued when blouses can be supplied, and the articles to be carried in the trains will be limited to such quantities as may be necessary to meet probable accidental losses. Camp equipage will, in like manner, be reduced to the lowest possible limit. Shelter-tents, only, will be issued to the troops of this command. All cumbersome articles of mess equipage, regimental and company desks, will be left behind; and the records, papers, &c., absolutely necessary in the field, will be packed in the lightest and most compact form. The equipment of officers will correspond to that of the men, and everything in excess of the established allowance will be rejected by the inspectors.

“No person, not in the military service of the United States, will be allowed to accompany any force operating in the field.

“Subsistence for troops in campaign will be limited to the essential articles of bread and meat, and a reduced allowance of the small rations. When they can be provided, bacon and hard bread will be taken in preference to their equivalents, and the resources of the country, in which the troops are to operate, must be considered in determining the quantity of supplies to be taken. The number of rations to be carried in the haversacks will be determined by circumstances, but the troops will habitually have on hand three days' cooked rations, so as to be in readiness to move at any moment.

“The land transportation in every command will be put in perfect order, and commanders will make their preparations in accordance with the condition above stated.” . . . . .

2. The detail of orderlies for the headquarters of the several commands in



*Transportation.*—The allowance of transportation on the campaign was: For the general headquarters, and for the headquarters of each army corps, three wagons; for the headquarters of each division, two wagons; for the headquarters of each brigade, one wagon; for each regiment of two hundred and fifty men, or less, one wagon; for each additional two hundred and fifty men or fraction of that number (not less than fifty), one wagon; for each battery, one wagon; for each company of pioneers, for its tools, one wagon.<sup>1</sup>

*Quarters.*—Officers as well as men were restricted to shelter tents; but for office purposes three wall tents were allowed to the headquarters of the army; two to army corps, and one to division or brigade headquarters, and one common (wedge) tent to each regiment or battery.

*Hospital.*—Hospital tents were allowed at the rate of one tent for each six hundred men, to be used only in division hospital organizations.

*Ambulances* were allowed at the rate of one to each four hundred men, one to each battery, two to the headquarters of

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this division, will be limited to the absolute necessities, and will not, except under extraordinary circumstances, exceed:

For an infantry brigade, three mounted and four foot orderlies.

For an infantry division, four mounted and five foot orderlies.

For a cavalry brigade, five mounted orderlies.

For a cavalry division, seven mounted orderlies.

The efficiency of companies will not be impaired by the detail of non-commissioned officers as clerks, orderlies, or on other special service, nor will they be detached from their companies unless the strength of the detachment, with which they are to serve, is such as to warrant it.

By order of Maj.-Gen. E. R. S. CANBY.

C. T. CHRISTENSEN,

OFFICIAL.

Lieut.-Col., Assistant Adjutant-General.

<sup>1</sup> "All officers are enjoined to bear in mind, that every man, or animal, or pound of baggage, beyond what is essential for efficiency, that has to be fed, transported, or guarded, is an embarrassment that must be avoided."—*General Order No. 22, Feb. 22, 1865.*



the army and of army corps; and to each division train of ambulances, three army wagons were allowed for transportation of hospital tents and mess-chests.

*Clothing* was limited to the suit the soldier wore, a change of underclothing, and an extra pair of shoes. But each man had a blanket, and some also, perhaps most, took along their overcoats. The extra articles of clothing were carried by the soldier in his knapsack.

*Rations* were limited to the essential articles of meat (three quarters of a pound of salt meat to a man per day), bread, coffee, sugar, and salt, and one fourth rations of soap.

*Ammunition* was required to be kept on hand in each battalion using small arms, in the proportion of one hundred rounds per man; each man to carry forty rounds in his cartridge-box; and each company commander always to hold in his possession, and transport in the company wagon the remaining sixty rounds per man; but in case it could not be so transported the men carried twenty rounds of it in their knapsacks. An additional one hundred rounds per man was carried in each division ammunition supply train, under charge of the acting ordnance officer. Each battery carried as near two hundred complete rounds of assorted ammunition per gun as the capacity of the caissons would admit. And another one hundred rounds per gun was carried in the division train.

*Equipment.*—Each infantry soldier was armed with the rifled musket and common bayonet; one pick, spade, and axe, were also carried to each twelve men.

*Pioneers.*—In each division a pioneer company was organized, by the selection of officers and men having aptitude for the duty, and who were well supplied with spades, shovels, axes, picks, saws, and carpenters' tools.

General orders No. 20, from headquarters of the commanding general, provided for division and brigade *staff* as follows :

"II. The chief quartermaster, commissary, engineer, ordnance, and medical officers at these headquarters, will assign an officer of their departments to each of the infantry divisions and cavalry brigades that are not already provided. Division commanders will appoint the inspectors and provost-marshals, subject to the approval of the corps commanders, and will nominate, for approval, the mustering officers for their divisions. The same rule, except in the case of mustering officers, will apply to infantry brigades when detached from their divisions. . . . .

"IV. The staff of division and brigade commanders will be limited to the officers indicated in paragraph II., and to their assistant adjutant-general and personal aids ; and no other staff or acting staff officers will be allowed, except upon the special recommendation of the corps commanders."

Orders were issued carefully defining the duties of the provost-marshal, and also prescribing a system of foraging. So it was prescribed as a rule, that every regiment, on reaching its position, should at once, without waiting for orders, cover its front by such temporary works as might be necessary. Nor was the duty to be intermitted on account of the supposed distance of the enemy ; and superior commanders were to be responsible that their flanks, and the intervals between adjacent commands, were in like manner covered.<sup>1</sup> Officers were reminded that the spade and the pick are useful adjuncts to the musket and the rifle.

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<sup>1</sup> General Field Order No. 1, March 7, 1865.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PLAN OF OPERATIONS

THE fortifications around Mobile were so strong that a direct movement on the place, from the western shore, would have encountered unequal resistance, and involved a protracted siege. It was therefore determined to flank them. The base would be fixed on the eastern shore; and the main army moving up on that shore, with the aid of the navy, would carry the forts on the islands and main land, and then approach Mobile by the Tensas river or one of the channels coming in above.

On this plan a large portion of the troops and the supplies could be moved by water into Fish river, affording a secure base within twenty miles of Spanish fort.

In the meantime, to destroy communication by railroad between Mobile and Montgomery, and to prevent reinforcements coming from the latter point to Mobile, or the garrison from escaping, a column of twelve thousand was to move out from Pensacola north. By moving as far as Pollard it would also create the belief that it was aiming at Montgomery, and tend to distract and deceive the confederates.

In case the main army should reduce the eastern shore defences sooner than was expected, then the column from Pensacola could be ordered on to Montgomery—though this was not contemplated; but if the operations were protracted, it would move round and form a junction with the main army.

So, if the reduction of those works demanded a very long time, then the forces would pass them, move on to Mont-



gomery—which was really the objective point—leaving Mobile to fall in due time by these indirect operations.

It is to be borne in mind that the difficulty in bringing up supplies by land, tended to retard a column moving far into the interior more than any armed resistance that could be expected.

While these operations should be progressing a large column of cavalry was to move down from North Alabama to divert the attention of Forrest and the bulk of the confederate cavalry, then hovering about Central Alabama and Mississippi.

Some smaller cavalry expeditions were projected, the achievements of which will be noticed.

## CHAPTER V.

### THIRTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CORPS MOVE TO DANLEY'S, ON FISH RIVER.

THE movement was commenced by the Thirteenth corps, March 17th. Benton's division, numbering six thousand, preceded by Bertram's brigade of the Second division—which during the campaign continued detached from its division—marched at half-past five from Fort Morgan, along the peninsula nine miles, and went into camp in an open pine forest. On the 18th, they marched thirteen miles on a good road over a natural shell bank, and camped at three, P. M., on Bayou portage. On the 19th, the unreliable and swampy character of the ground disclosed itself, the firm appearing surface proving, when wet, to be a mere crust, under which was a bottomless quicksand. Through this crust the wagons sank to the hubs. The head of the column passing round Bon Secour's bay, moved only a few miles, and the rear-guard got only a mile and a half. Large details were set at work corduroying the worst places. On the 20th, starting at nine, A. M., they moved slowly, the rain falling in torrents, and the corduroy afloat, and made four miles by night. Veatch's division having crossed from Fort Gaines to Navy cove, the 17th, had now closed up on the Third division, and halted two days to let the latter division get in advance, but was obliged, meantime, to keep heavy details at work on the roads.

At six, the morning of the 21st, the rain still pouring, Benton's division moved on; but the train could not even get out



of park. Every team seeking an untried path soon got mired, and wagons were seen in all directions sunk down to the hubs. The poor animals, in their struggles to haul the teams, half buried themselves. In this dilemma, long ropes were made fast to the teams, and the soldiers, with cheerfulness and alacrity, hauled both animals and wagons out of the mire with a rush; and it was only their speed that saved each team from again sinking at every rod. The same laborious efforts were applied to the field artillery. The corps and division commanders were present, wading about in the mud to their knees, and the latter himself lending a hand at the ropes. In hauling the Twenty-sixth New York battery through a bad place, where the newly-made corduroy had been washed away, the men moved some distance in mud and water waist deep. These labors were being watched by confederate scouts. Only about two miles were made that day. The division went into camp at three, P. M., and made some fortifications on their right. The bay was only three miles distant on the left. Yet only two miles off in that direction two hundred and fifty confederate cavalry camped the same night; and before dark, hoping to capture a few foragers or stragglers, had driven up some cattle in sight of the camp of the Thirteenth corps; yet without avail, as the orders about foraging were well enforced.

Bertram's brigade having pushed on with great energy, and done its share of bridge-building and corduroying, yet enjoying the privilege of the advance all the way, reached Fish river the same afternoon (21st) with Foust's battery and the wagons. The scouts attached to the brigade—thirty men of the Fourth Wisconsin cavalry, under Lieut. Knowles, had a small skirmish during the day. The same afternoon, Capt. J. J. Smith's company of pontoniers had, in three hours, taken the boats from raft and laid a bridge, three hundred and twenty feet in length, over Fish river. Bertram's brigade crossed over on this the

next morning, and went into camp near the Sixteenth corps, and intrenched and felled trees in their front.

The 22d opened fair. Late in the day this part of the column marched on through a pine forest, and in the evening, having gone five miles, went into camp on high ground ; the rear of the division came up by the light of the burning pitch trees.

The 23d, Benton moved on over a fair road, though hilly, six miles, to the north fork of Fish river, crossed it on a pontoon, and went into camp on the right of the Sixteenth corps, the bands playing, "Oh, ain't you glad you're out of the wilderness." So wretched had been the road the train was not all up for three or four days ; but Col. Mackay, of the Thirty-third Iowa, succeeded in getting a section of twenty wagons in that night.

Veatch's division, having resumed the march on the 22d, encountered similar difficulties and performed similar toils to those that retarded the advance.

The afternoon of the 24th, when within a few miles of Danley's, the column, not being well closed up, was boldly attacked by a small party of confederate scouts, and some men and animals captured, in the following manner :

*Attack on the Train.*—On the morning of the 24th, Lieut. Sibley, of the Fifteenth confederate cavalry, acting as scout for Gen. Lidell, left Greenwood with eight men, and passing round Polecat creek, came in sight of the First division, two miles above Magnolia, by the middle of the afternoon. The small party halted and watched for stragglers. Soon they saw five men by themselves, who appeared to be resting ; and cautiously moving toward them till within a few yards, then spurring their horses into a keen gallop, and raising a yell, they charged and captured them. The men were surprised and made no resistance. They belonged to the First brigade, the commander of which was sitting not far off. Two of the men were from the Twenty-ninth Wisconsin, one being a drummer. Disarming the prison-



ers, and leaving three men only to guard them, Lieut. Sibley, with the balance of his men, in half an hour charged on the train, a few hundred yards below, and captured a few wagoners and ten mules, and was prevented from further mischief by the Ninety-ninth Illinois coming up. He then returned with all his prisoners to Greenwood, and from there despatched to Gen. Lidell, at Blakely, that he learned from the prisoners that Gen. A. J. Smith had a command on the *Western shore* to operate against Mobile—an error which, whether fabricated or not by the prisoners, helped to compensate for their capture.

This gallant feat of Lieut. Sibley created some excitement in the column. Men were hurried up from the rear, and some came back from the front to the scene of the affair.

The division crossed Fish river the same evening, and went into camp with the rest of the corps.

*Demonstration on the Western Shore.*—While the main army was moving up the east shore, a demonstration was also made on the west shore, to create the impression that the principal movement was there to be made. At noon, on the 18th, Col. J. B. Moore, with his brigade—First of Third division, Sixteenth corps—consisting of the Thirty-third Wisconsin, Ninety-fifth and Seventy-second Illinois, and Forty-fourth Missouri—seventeen hundred effective—and two Rodman guns of the First Indiana light battery, embarked for Cedar point. Arriving there, the pier was found nearly destroyed, and the men landed by passing in single file over a slight trestle-work. The confederates occupied the point in small force, which was driven back two miles, without any trouble, by the Seventy-second Illinois, Lieut.-Col. Stockton commanding. The artillery was landed by means of a temporary raft made with boats; and commencing repairs on the pier at daylight the next morning, the horses were got on shore by tel., and at two, P. M., Moore moved forward, and at Alabama point, two miles up the bay,

met the confederate outposts, consisting of two mounted companies, which fell back with slight resistance, the Ninety-fifth Illinois, Col. Blanding, being in the advance and pursuing them. At five, P. M., Moore went into camp, and that night and the next morning had the calls repeated three or four times, to impress the enemy with the magnitude of his forces. At eight o'clock the next morning (20th), he advanced to Fowle river, where he met some resistance, the confederates having set the bridge on fire and taken position on the opposite side; but he brought up his two guns and threw over some skirmishers without difficulty. Here he halted, not having orders to go further, and was gratified to learn that his force had been reported in Mobile, at from four thousand to six thousand. In this vicinity, and at different points on the road, some torpedoes were found, which were narrowly escaped; and what was more singular, respectable American inhabitants were found who had never seen the United States flag, and desired Colonel Moore to show it to them, which he did. On the 22d, he received orders to embark for Fish river, and on the 23d, rejoined his division.

*Movement of the Sixteenth Corps.*—The Sixteenth corps moved on transports from Fort Gaines to Danley's ferry landing, on north bank of Fish river; and the boats having to make two trips, the movement occupied the 20th, 21st, and 22d. Carr was ordered, with the boats carrying his division, to stand boldly up the bay, as if intending to land on the main shore, and then fall back and enter Fish river, which was done.

Fish river is a dark, narrow, and crooked stream, and such boats as the Tarrascon and Starlight seemed to fill it to its banks. The latter, some distance from its mouth, swell into moderate bluffs, which were covered with a generous growth of cypress, magnolia, and pine, and fringed with a variety of flowers and shrubs. Occasionally a house was passed, the poor



inmates of which, having but a feeble conception of the troops, habitually hung out a white flag. A bald eagle, from the crest of a lofty pine, screamed out a welcome to the youthful veterans who thickly covered the decks; and they, remembering from their school-books how the ancient heroes received such an omen, accepted this as a favorable augury, and shouted out their usual cheers.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THREE DAYS AT FISH RIVER.

THE Sixteenth corps remained in camp at Fish river for the Thirteenth corps to come up by land, and for supplies, transportation, and some of the heavy guns, to come up by water.

Fish river, at Danley's ferry, is eighty yards wide and the current sluggish. The north bank is moderately high, the soil sandy, and covered with an open pine forest. Near by were the ruins of a mill, and four or five humble dwellings.

Gen. Carr continued the brigade drills in his division which he had commenced at Fort Gaines, soon after assuming its command, and constantly improved its discipline and efficiency. And, in subsequent marches, no division of the corps was so poorly supplied as that with chickens and pigs; nor did any division have higher reputation for gallantry.

All this while the confederate Gen. Lidell, commanding the eastern division district of the gulf, had his scouts actively employed, endeavoring to learn Canby's strength and movements.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The following despatches, as to movements before Spanish fort, are copied from Gen. Lidell's Letter and Despatch Book :

*Capt. Lewis (A. A. A. G.), to Capt. Morgan, commanding cavalry at Montrose :* " *Hd. Qrs. East. Div. Dist. Gulf, Blakely, March 20, 1865, 2:15 p. m.*—Don't let the enemy come up the eastern shore, or from Fish river, without timely notifying these headquarters. Watch closely, and don't allow yourself to be surprised. Give timely notice to Maj. Kimball, comd'g the infantry near Hollywood."

*Same to Lieut.-Col. Brown, commanding at Spanish Fort :* " *March 20, 5 p. m.*—Scrutinize most closely all persons to whom you give passes, and pass no

The 23d, the confederate cavalry came up at daylight and felt the pickets on McArthur's front. Two hours afterward they advanced a line of skirmishers afoot, in which skirmish a man of the Eighth Wisconsin was seriously wounded, and two others slightly wounded. The confederates lost one killed and two wounded. But the firing was more general and protracted along the line than the event justified.

The navy having kept pace with the army, on the 24th, some of its guns shelled the woods from the bay.

woman without you know well who they are. There is a Mrs. ———, who, it is said, is a spy for the enemy, and whom it is said has recently obtained passes from Spanish fort."

*Gen. Lidell to Col. Garner, Chief of Staff, Mobile:* "*Blakely, Mar. 20.* . . . At last accounts, since dark, Col. Spence was at Whitby's bridge, on Fish river, trying to make discoveries through his scouts in various directions, as to the locality of the enemy."

"This afternoon, from two o'clock to dark, fifteen gunboats have been shelling the eastern shore, from Rock creek to the village, about six miles. No damage done except to houses. . . . Spanish fort is in a less state of preparation now than this place, and I desire to put all the work on it I can." . . .

*Gen. Lidell to Col. Spence, commanding cavalry, Montrose:* "*Mar. 21, 8:45 p. m.*—Can you not possibly capture some of the enemy's pickets, to find out the force they have? If you cannot, make your preparations to drive them in to-morrow at daylight, to see what they have."

*Gen. Lidell to Col. Garner:* "*March 22, 11½ a. m.*—Col. Spence reports (8, a. m.) that he failed to capture the enemy's pickets at Danley's mill last night, as chain pickets were too close to the main body. Discovered only infantry as yet. No force has landed on bay shore." . . .

*Same to Same:* "*March 22.*—Despatch just received from Lieut. Sibley, that a prisoner, captured on East Prong of Fish river, states he belongs to Ninety-first Illinois regiment, Thirteenth army corps, Gen. Granger commanding, comprising 9,000 (nine thousand) men. Three regiments were in the advance at Danley's mill—three regiments near Magnolia, as yet but fifteen pieces of artillery with them—balance coming. Assisted in loading the wagons, and heard Commissary say that he had issued rations for nine thousand men."

*Lidell to Maury:* "*March 23, 8:45 a. m.*—Every man sent to the enemy's lines has either been unable to get admission, or, if admitted, has not returned to report."

*Capt. Lewis to Capt. Bush Jones, commanding infantry, near Hollywood:* "*March 23, 4:50 p. m.*—Col. Spence reports, that the men you sent him refused to advance upon the enemy, and the general directs that you furnish him better men."



At this time some disappointment was being felt in the camp for the lack of mails.

Such of the soldiers as were disposed assembled in religious meetings when circumstances permitted. One pleasant evening, in Gilbert's brigade (Garrard's division, Sixteenth corps), a thousand men were assembled, and the woods being lit up by fires of pine-knots, the soldiers poured forth their fervent prayers and joined their voices in sacred hymns. Nor will those who remember such heroes as Havelock deny that piety is a help to valor.

On the 25th, Canby moved forward with both corps and some of the heavy artillery; the men carrying four days' rations in haversacks. The Thirtieth Missouri was left to guard the pontoon bridge. The Sixteenth corps marched at eight, A. M. Hubbard's brigade of McArthur's division being in the advance. The Thirteenth corps was under way by one, P. M.

McArthur's division had got but a short distance when a small force of the confederates was met, which was steadily pressed back by four companies of the Ninth Minnesota deployed as skirmishers. There was more or less skirmishing during the day, but the column was not retarded. Col. Marshall, commanding Third brigade, First division, Sixteenth corps, was wounded in the back of his neck by the ball of a sharpshooter, but stopped only long enough to have the wound dressed. The Sixteenth corps camped at Deer Park, having marched twelve miles. The Thirteenth corps encamped in the same neighborhood. And the troops intrenched in compliance with the general order.

Bertram's brigade of Second division, Thirteenth corps, had had moved on the left road to Montrose. At this place, which is a pleasant summer resort, the inhabitants were all confederates, and some of their cavalry had been there during



the day. One of the ladies in a defiant manner told a regimental commander he would find his match on the morrow—that Sherman had lately been defeated with great loss, and that victory had now turned in their favor; a fair specimen of stories which were ever being reported and did much to keep up the spirits of the confederates.

The next day, 26th, Bertram's brigade moved to D'Olieve's creek over a hilly road, the confederate cavalry hanging along their front all the way. The bridge over the creek had been destroyed, and both banks at the ford were thickly planted with torpedoes, and in attempting to cross, the explosions fatally wounded three men and killed four horses; fifty torpedoes were there taken up the next day. Being now in the vicinity of Spanish fort, the brigade camped on the creek; Benton's division of the Thirteenth corps being in sight on the right. There were indications of the presence of confederate infantry, a few of whom were captured by Bertram's brigade. During the day its scouts had captured a confederate telegraph station with the latest despatches.

Granger, with Veatch's and Benton's divisions—the former in the advance—after getting two miles from Deer Park, turned to the left on a road running northwesterly, and struck D'Olieve's creek about noon a mile to the right of Bertram. The banks were here high and somewhat steep, but the stream was not wide, and a bridge was soon made, over which the column passed. Ascending the hill on the north bank, the column soon moved down its opposite side, where was another stream, which was bridged and crossed; and after rising the high ground beyond, both divisions went into camp, Veatch's in front and in line of battle. The train and rear-guard were not all in till nine in the evening.

The Twenty-first Iowa, Lieut.-Col. Van Anda commanding, had been in the advance all day; and the skirmishers from

that regiment, under Maj. Boardman, with those from the Ninety-ninth Illinois, Col. A. C. Matthews, had been warmly engaged at different times. Granger rode along the line at dusk, and thinking the pickets not far enough out, ordered an advance. The skirmishers with their reserves then moved forward half a mile up a gradual rise in the pine timber; and the leaves and underbrush having been fired by the confederates, the light gave the latter a full view of what was coming; whereupon they rose up, gave a heavy volley of musketry, but soon fell back. The fire was promptly returned, and Granger, being in the advance, narrowly escaped; for it was dark, and he was a few moments between the fire of his own reserves and that of the confederates. In the Twenty-first Iowa, Private Allen was killed, and three men were wounded. In the Ninety-ninth Illinois, Private Robinson was killed. At midnight both regiments were relieved by the Forty-seventh Indiana, and One Hundred and Sixty-first New York.

Leaving Spanish fort three miles on its left, the Sixteenth corps marched on a direct route to C. Sibley's mill. Garrard's division had the advance, and at the head of the column, the Tenth Kansas, Lieut.-Col. Hills, and four companies of the Sixth Minnesota, under Major H. S. Bailey, were deployed as skirmishers. Sharp firing commenced as soon as the head of the column had moved a mile, and continued all the way, there being a detention of two hours. But no serious resistance was met till the bridge at Sibley's mill was reached, which was finally crossed, and the corps went into camp on high ground, a mile north of Bayou Minette, on which Sibley's mill is situated, the distance marched being ten miles. Of the confederates who were killed, three were buried near the bridge, and there were some wounded. The Sixth Minnesota lost two men captured, and the Tenth Kansas two wounded. The second Tennessee (federal) cavalry had two men wounded.



*Plans and Position of the Confederates.*—At this time the confederate department commander was Lieut.-Gen. Richard Taylor, headquarters at Meridian, Mississippi; Maj.-Gen. D. H. Maury was in command of the district of the gulf, with headquarters at Mobile.

The garrison of Mobile, including troops on eastern shore, numbered about nine thousand.<sup>1</sup> There were, on the 27th of March, also upward of a thousand blacks subject to the orders of the engineer. Lieut.-Gen. Taylor telegraphed Lee that he was ready to receive any attack that might be made there.<sup>2</sup> Maury's command also embraced the garrisons on the eastern shore, where the senior officer was Brig.-Gen. Lidell. The latter's headquarters had been at a cottage on the Blakely road, about a mile outside of the fortifications at Blakely, his troops being camped on the high ground in an open pine forest a little further to the front. These forces comprised French's division, then commanded by Brig.-Gen. Cockrell, including the brigades of Col. Gates and Col. Barry; the brigades of Brig.-Gens. J. T. Holtzclaw and R. L. Gibson; Ector's Texas brigade, then commanded by Col. Andrews, and Gen. Thomas' Alabama reserves—the whole effective infantry numbering about six thousand. There were also three hundred cavalry, and inside the works several batteries. All of these troops, except the reserves, and perhaps the cavalry, were veterans from Hood's army.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lieut.-Gen. Taylor to Maury*: "March 24, 1865.—Should the enemy give Mobile the 'go by,' and march on Selma or Montgomery, it may become necessary suddenly to throw six or seven thousand infantry up the river from Mobile, to assist the cavalry."

<sup>2</sup> *Taylor to Lee*: "March 27.—Enemy has thrown his large force to eastern side of Mobile bay, leaving nothing on west side. I am ready to receive any attack he may make at Mobile."

*Taylor to Maury*: "March 25.—If Steele is marching to Montgomery, you ought, by concentrating, be able to whip the force approaching the Spanish fort."

Holtzclaw's brigade was still farther to the front, on outpost duty at O. Sibley's mill (four miles north of C. Sibley's), where were some breastworks and a few light guns. In the road were a number of torpedoes.

On the 23d, while Col. Spence with cavalry was scouting toward Fish river, an infantry support under Col. Bush Jones of Alabama, was at Hollywood. On the 24th, Gen. Gibson with a column of infantry and artillery had moved down to the "village," eight miles below Spanish fort, and there halted. The same evening, Bertram's brigade having pushed forward resolutely to Montrose, three miles from the village, and Canby's other columns being on the move, Gibson faced about and took position on the hill north of D'Olieve's creek, and there remained on the 25th. Gen. Cockrell with his division was now (the 25th) posted four miles northeast of Gibson at Alexis spring, being three miles south of C. Sibley's mill. Capt. Tutt was ordered to withdraw from Greenwood to Sibley's mill and scout on the road to Durant's. Col. Spence was skirmishing in front of Bertram's brigade which he took for a division,<sup>1</sup> and was instructed by Lidell, if pressed across D'Olieve's creek, to return by Alexis spring and the Sibley road. That forenoon Lidell was at Spanish fort; and thinking that Granger's corps only was approaching, and judging from the bad roads that the divisions would be separated, had concluded to offer battle the next morning on the north bank of D'Olieve's creek, where the ground is high and hilly; and this was approved by the generals under him. Gibson with two brigades was to form on the right, Cockrell with three brigades on the left, and Holtzclaw being

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. Lidell to Col. Spence, "commanding near village:" "Blakely, March 25.—I will be at D'Olieve's ford early to-morrow, say by seven o'clock. Can you ascertain how far this division is in advance of the main body of the army? Can we attack it before support can come to it?"



held in the rear would, as soon as the engagement commenced, move round and strike the federals on their right flank. And they estimated that their effective force of infantry would be about six thousand.

Gibson already occupied the proposed line, having, the afternoon of the 25th, three thousand in line of battle. That evening, Liddell learned that the Sixteenth corps was also advancing with the Thirteenth, and so fast that he feared he would not be able to get the rest of his forces concentrated in season. He appeared to have been active day and night eliciting information and making the best possible use of his troops.<sup>1</sup> The next morning, finding his position was being flanked by the Sixteenth corps, the proposed offer of battle

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<sup>1</sup> *Capt. Lewis to Gen. Holtzclaw* : " *Blakely, March 26.*—The Brig.-Gen. commanding directs that you push forward your work as much as possible in cutting down the timber in front of your position. . . . The enemy are in force on the D'Olieve and Blakely road, in front of Spanish fort, and their fleet massing off Hollywood and Montrose. Please send at once what information you get from your scouts."

*Liddell to Gibson* : " *March 26.*—Some of our cavalry are cut off between Spanish fort and Bay Minette. The enemy are advancing by Sibley's mills; if they come by you keep them at Spanish fort."

*Liddell to Maury* : " *Blakely, March 25, 9:20 p. m.*—Our views fully coincide; unless able to concentrate, shall not risk engagement in detail. Will return to front by seven a. m. to-morrow, and soon afterwards hope to meet you at Spanish fort; please not to fail to come. Enemy's advance division, five to six thousand, headed by five hundred cavalry—no ordnance or ambulance wagons. Gen. Gibson's scouts saw enemy's column, and captured the prisoner (draftsman) sent over. A map in his possession embraced the eastern shore only to Blakely—showing the design of enemy to get possession of this side."

*Liddell to Maury* : " *Hd. Qrs., near (O.) Sibley's, March 26, 12:30 p. m.*—Your despatch received while engaged placing troops in position at this place. The enemy is at Cyrus Sibley's mill, and halted just now. He made too wide a circuit for me to concentrate the command on him. Gen. Gibson was at D'Olieve creek, and another column was reported moving in that direction. I have not heard from Gen. Gibson since reaching this point. C. Sibley's mill is four miles distant."

*Same to Gibson* : " *March 26 (Sibley's).*—Enemy stopped four miles from this point. What is in your front?"

outside of the works was abandoned. The troops that belonged at Blakely were ordered to retire in that direction. Cockrell withdrew over the Bay Minette bridge, burned it, and passing round near Blakely, moved out on the Sibley road to watch the Sixteenth corps. Gibson was ordered to fall back into Spanish fort; but to develop the attacking army before doing so; which we shall see was in a gallant manner done.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SPANISH FORT—ITS INVESTMENT.

THE line of field fortifications known as Spanish fort is on the bay shore, seven miles due east of Mobile. The traveller leaving the Montgomery railroad, and proceeding by steamer from Tensas to Mobile, in a few minutes comes in sight of Blakely. Passing on, he will, in half an hour, discern off to his left, and beyond some low, marshy islands, a clearing, on the wooded shore, and a high, red bluff. This latter is the site of Spanish fort.

Old Spanish fort is a bastioned work, nearly enclosed, and built on a bluff whose shape projects abruptly to the water. Its parapet, on the bay side, was partly natural, being made by excavating the earth from the side of the bluff, and was thirty feet in thickness. The fort was armed with VII-inch columbiads and thirty-pounder Parrotts—the latter made at Selma—and was designated as No. 1. Extending around that, in a semicircle, was a continuous line of breastworks and redoubts. The right of this line commenced four hundred yards down the shore, on the highest and most prominent bluff, upward of one hundred feet above the water, with a strong, enclosed fort, called McDermott (No. 2), and armed with ten heavy guns. The slope of the bluff, toward the bay, is precipitous, and from its base to the water is a marsh two hundred yards wide, on which the timber had been felled. To the north and left the descent was gradual, along which extended a line of rifle-pits, crossing a ravine and stream of water, and then up the









slope of another bluff, on which was a strong battery, designated as No. 3. From there the line of works continued six hundred yards in a northerly direction, and then turned toward the bay, striking the marsh on Bay Minette at a point about a mile above old Spanish fort. This outer line of works was upward of two miles in length, and the batteries were all on high and commanding ground. The surface was covered with open pine timber, but in front of the outer line of works the trees were felled for a few hundred yards. Every ravine had borne a heavy growth of hard wood, which, having been slashed, made, with the underbrush and vines, an almost impassable obstruction. The ditch in front of the breastworks was five feet deep and eight feet wide, but in front of Fort McDermett it was deeper and wider. In front of the batteries were, also, detached rifle-pits, for sharpshooters; and along the entire front was a line of abatis fifteen feet wide. On the extreme left the works were unfinished.

Toward the interior the surface continued undulating and wooded; but no spot was so commanding as the bare crest of McDermett.

The reader will bear in mind that these fortifications were made to cover and protect the island batteries Huger and Tracy, which were three thousand yards distant.

*Attack on the Federal Pickets.*—At daylight, on the morning of the 27th, a detachment of four hundred confederate infantry, under command of Col. Richard Lindsay, carefully moved down within musket-range of Veatch's picket, fired a volley, and, with a yell, charged between the flanks of the Forty-seventh Indiana and One Hundred and Sixty-first New York. The right of the latter regiment was driven back in some confusion towards the main line, but shortly regained its position. The confederates got near enough to see the strong front of Veatch's division, which was quickly in line behind their newly-

made breastworks, but were soon compelled to retire. The firing was brisk for a few minutes, and the confederates lost one officer and several men wounded.<sup>1</sup> The loss of the Forty-seventh Indiana was three men wounded.

*Investment of Spanish Fort.*—Gen. Carr learned, late on the evening of the 26th, that the Sixteenth corps would turn back in the morning against Spanish fort; and knowing it would be his turn in the advance, he gave the requisite instructions to his brigade commanders. The morning of the 27th came with a prospect of heavy rain, which to veteran soldiers was some sign of a battle. The men had taken their accustomed breakfast, of hard-bread, coffee, and a slice of bacon, toasted on a stick—as Achilles cooked the fat chine at the feast for the heroes. The usual hum of talk and speculation was heard around the expiring fires of their bivouac. By the men in the ranks all plans of strategy are freely canvassed; and up to this morning they had expected to move on to the Alabama river. Soon was heard the spirited roll on the drum to “fall in,” greeted by that habitual and never-to-be-forgotten shout or cheer of the men. Then the cartridge-box, with its “forty rounds” is buckled on; the blanket is twisted up and thrown around the shoulders; the intrenching tools are picked up; the muskets taken; each company is formed, the roll called, and at the time fixed, whether in ten or fifteen minutes, the regiments are in line.

Leaving Garrard's division at Sibley's mill, Smith put the First and Third divisions of his corps in motion. Carr's (Third) division had the advance, with Geddes' (Third) brigade in ad-

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<sup>1</sup> *Gibson to Lidell*: “*Spanish Fort, March 27, 7:35 A. M.*—Drove in the enemy's skirmishers at daylight, capturing guns, knapsacks, and blankets. They ran back to their log works, and appeared in a strong and extended line of battle. We had several men wounded. Several launches discovered sounding in the cove below. The guns will drive them away.”



vance of the division ; and at the head of the column was the Eighty-first Illinois, numbering three hundred, five companies of which, under Col. A. W. Rogers, were deployed as skirmishers, with the other five companies, under Capt. S. L. Campbell, in reserve. In these woods were numerous trails which had been made in hauling lumber to the neighboring mills, and the guns being silent at Spanish fort, the column had to find its way as best it could.

*Skirmish at Minette Bridge.*—Carr had gone four miles, and his advance, the Eighty-first Illinois, had just passed the brow of the hill overlooking Minette bayou, where the day before the bridge had been burned, when suddenly a volley came from a confederate regiment, concealed in the bushes, four hundred yards distant, on the opposite side. This was the Twenty-first Alabama, Lieut.-Col. James M. Williams, having two hundred and twenty-five men. Gen. Smith narrowly escaped, and some shots took effect in the Eighty-first. Col. Rogers returned the fire smartly, and was ordered by General Smith to remain there with his regiment and hold that position.

The One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois, Col. John H. Howe commanding, then took the advance, with five of his companies deployed as skirmishers.

When within about a mile of Spanish fort, Gen. Smith caused both divisions to deploy in line of battle, and it was his purpose, of course, to have his movements concealed from the enemy.

Carr's division, on the right, had formed in two lines ; the first consisting of the Third (Geddes') brigade, the One Hundred and Eighth Illinois on the right, the Eighth Iowa on the left, the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois deployed as skirmishers in front. The second line, consisting of the First (Moore's) and the Second (Ward's) brigades ; Moore's having the Thirty-third Wisconsin on the right, the Seventy-second

Illinois in the centre, the Ninety-fifth Illinois on the left, and the Forty-fourth Missouri in reserve; and Ward's, having the Fourteenth Wisconsin on the right, the Forty-ninth Missouri in the centre, the Fortieth Missouri on the left. The latter brigade had wheeled into line on the double-quick, and had been a few minutes in position, when the corps commander rode along with a stern countenance. At sight of their "chief," the men of the Forty-ninth Missouri gave a cheer which could be heard in the confederate lines. Thus foiled in his efforts to conceal the position, he rebuked the men in a few hasty words. In half a minute a shell from the confederate works came screeching through the trees, and dropped close to the men who had cheered. It did not burst as it fell, and the men gave back a little. Seeing this, Smith cried out to them: "Stand up to it! You had no business cheering."

Carr's centre and the light batteries approached by the Blakely road. Sharp skirmishing commenced about ten, A. M., when within a mile of Spanish fort. The confederate sharpshooters were in advance of their rifle-pits, using the hills and trees for cover.

At this hour, McArthur's division was in line on the left of Carr; and connecting with the left of the Sixteenth corps, Granger had come up with the Thirteenth corps; so that the investment was nearly complete. The troops advanced with alacrity, their banners all unfurled. Their line was three miles in length, and presented a splendid appearance moving through the open woods. Sharp skirmishing was constant along the whole front. The confederates, apprehending an assault, also kept up a vehement shelling with their heavy and light guns. And there was all the clamor and stir of battle.

The confederates had the advantage of being on the defensive, and being concealed, while the federals had the disadvantage of exposure, in pressing forward against the fire of sharpshooters,

and over the obstacles on the ground ; but, at the same time, they had the moral advantage there is in the prestige and momentum of constantly gaining ground.

Up to noon no federal artillery had opened, but the light batteries of each division were near by in the hollows. A little after noon, Carr caused the Fourteenth Indiana light battery, Capt. F. W. Morse, to open from a ridge about eight hundred yards from Red fort, and near the position afterward occupied by the naval battery. Capt. Morse's fire was replied to with spirit during the afternoon, and many shots fell close, but no injury was sustained. Soon afterward, the First Indiana light battery, Capt. L. Jacoby, opened from a prominent position, a little to the left and front of the Fourteenth. Both batteries were supported by Moore's brigade.

It was now toward the middle of the afternoon. The rain was coming down in a steady pour, and the fierceness of the artillery fire had abated.

Carr, expecting to be ordered to assault, and feeling confident the works could be carried in his front, exerted himself to keep his lines compact.

The One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois had pressed on fearlessly, gaining distance of half a mile in advance of its brigade, when the confederate skirmishers were met and, after a warm contest, driven precipitously into their works. Five of that regiment fell, including its adjutant, Lieut. W. E. Smith, and the color-sergeant. On the extreme right was the One Hundred and Eighth Illinois, Col. Charles Turner, which sustained a loss of six. Its skirmishers were commanded by Capt. W. M. Bullock, a daring and efficient officer, who fell, with his thigh badly shattered by a musket-ball ; but he refused to allow any of the men to expose themselves in helping him away, and dragged himself to the rear. The Eighth Iowa, distinguished for discipline and gallantry, Lieut.-Col. Bell commanding, was



next on the left, and had thirteen men wounded by musketry, and of this number six were non-commissioned officers.

Next on the left, in Moore's brigade, was the Thirty-third Wisconsin, which sustained a loss of six wounded, including Maj. George R. Frank. The loss in the Seventy-second Illinois was two, and in the Ninety-fifth Illinois four. In Ward's brigade there was a loss of one man in each regiment. So that the whole casualties in Carr's division were thirty-nine. The confederates in his front had been driven into their main works, and his line was established six hundred yards on an average therefrom. The ensuing night the division busily intrenched.

The advance along the left had conformed to the right and with nearly similar results.

*McArthur's Division, Sixteenth Corps.*—McArthur's division came squarely up opposite the Red fort, and began to encounter a stubborn resistance from the confederates at ten in the morning, nearly a mile from that work. The ground was well contested; but before noon the confederates had been pressed back behind their main works; the main line of the division had got within about twelve hundred yards of those works; a halt was ordered and the men made to lie down. Meantime, the skirmishers of the division had pushed their way some hundreds of yards farther. In the First (McMillen's) brigade on the right the casualties were one in the Thirty-third Illinois, three in the Tenth Minnesota, two in the Twenty-sixth Indiana, and one in the Seventy-second Ohio. The Second (Hubbard's) brigade was in the centre, and suffered the most. The Eighth Wisconsin (Lieut.-Col. W. B. Britton), on the right had three killed and twenty-seven wounded. In the Eleventh Missouri (Col. E. Bowyer), the casualties were twelve; Ninth Minnesota (Col. J. H. Marsh), two; Fifth Minnesota (Lieut.-Col. W. B. Gere), six; Forty-seventh Illinois (Lieut.-Col. Bonham), two, including Capt. Ryan. The Third (Marshall's) brigade was on the left, the

Thirty-third Missouri (Col. W. H. Heath) being on the right. Next was the Thirty-fifth Iowa (Lieut.-Col. W. B. Keeler), which lost two; then the Twelfth Iowa (Maj. Samuel G. Knee), which lost five wounded, and on the extreme left was the Seventh Minnesota (Lieut.-Col. Geo. Bradley). In this regiment Lieut. Folsom was slightly wounded by a piece of shell from one of the guns of the division, and Private McFadden was killed while lying on the ground skirmishing. The right of the Thirteenth corps over-lapped three regiments of Marshall's brigade, and at dusk they were ployed in column of regiments in the rear, leaving him only the front of one regiment. His skirmishers had eagerly pushed their way into the fallen trees and brush in the advance, and Corporal Fry of the Twelfth Iowa had got so far that he was taken for a confederate and received a severe wound in the foot, from some one in the rear.

The Second Iowa battery (Capt. J. R. Reed), with four twelve-pounder Napoleons opened fire on Red fort, one thousand yards distant; and the Third Indiana battery of Rodman guns (Capt. T. J. Ginn), from a prominent point on the left.

In the *Thirteenth corps*, Veatch's division having bivouacked in the front, had been working most of the night intrenching, had been in line of battle at three in the morning, and the men were not feeling very fresh when they moved out at seven. But they were ready for a fight, and the belief prevailed that they were going to take Spanish fort by assault. Veatch deployed when he had proceeded a mile with Slack's brigade on the right, the Third brigade, Lieut.-Col. Kinsey commanding, on the left, and Dennis' in reserve.

Benton's division, moving at nine, came up on the right in three columns of regiments deployed, connecting with the Sixteenth corps.

Bertram's brigade of Second division was sent round to the right of the Thirteenth corps, but was soon afterward



ordered back, and taking the road round by Wadsworth's returned to its former position, and then closed up on the left.

In the Third brigade (Benton's division), commanded by Col. Conrad Krez of the Twenty-seventh Wisconsin, the Seventy-seventh Ohio had been detailed to guard the train and had moved to the rear, so that the brigade front consisted of the Twenty-seventh Wisconsin and the Thirty-third Iowa, with the Twenty-eighth Wisconsin in reserve. These regiments were at first employed to support the Twenty-sixth New York battery, and afterward formed on the right of the corps; but met with no loss during the day.

Day's brigade of Benton's division, being in the centre, came up opposite old Spanish fort, the guns of which had good range through a large ravine. The Ninety-first Illinois was in the advance of that brigade with skirmishers deployed, and subjected the confederates to some loss in forcing them back over the fallen trees to their breastworks. When the line halted, about nine hundred yards from those works, a portion of the skirmish line was relieved by Capt. Dutton's company of the Seventh Vermont who had four men slightly wounded; and there was one other wounded in the same regiment. During the afternoon, Grier's brigade furnished a detail to construct temporary works for the Twenty-first New York battery, which had taken position on a prominent spur near the right of that brigade. At dark, the Ninety-first Illinois and Twenty-ninth Iowa began intrenching, a little in advance of the line occupied during the day, and the Fiftieth Indiana and Seventh Vermont took position two hundred yards in the rear.

Col. D. P. Grier's brigade of the same division, after deploying, threw out the Ninety-sixth Ohio, Lieut.-Col. Brown, as skirmishers, and moving on, opposite Fort McDermott, passed



through the right of Veatch's division where the men were intrenching and soon saw the confederate skirmishers approaching over the brow of a hill in advance; but meeting a well-directed fire from the Ninety-sixth Ohio they hastily retreated to their works responding with only a few shots. The Ninety-sixth then pushed forward about a hundred yards farther. This opened the way for the Seventh Massachusetts light battery, Capt. Storer, to come up on a rise of ground seven hundred and fifty yards from McDermett, and in rear of which Grier's brigade constructed a cover. The Seventh Massachusetts battery was engaged for three hours.

All along the line the regimental colors were planted in the ground, and afforded a mark for the confederate guns.

In the Twenty-ninth Wisconsin, Slack's brigade of Veatch's division, the private Joel Norton, acting as color bearer, was killed by a piece of shell, and a skirmisher of that regiment was wounded. Veatch's whole loss during the day was two killed and sixteen wounded.

On the extreme left, and next to the bay, was Bertram's brigade, squarely in front of Fort McDermett, and the approach was difficult, on account of the obstructions of slashings. The Nineteenth Iowa, Lieut.-Col. John Bruce commanding, was in the advance. With skirmishers deployed, that regiment crossed an open field and coming into clear range of the guns of McDermett, pushed forward still farther into the fallen trees, but was greeted with a severe fire of artillery. The Nineteenth Iowa then hastily threw up some logs and earth for protection. Foust's battery (F, First Missouri) of steel guns, came up meantime, and soon, with its skilful fire, silenced the guns in McDermett. Several of the Nineteenth had been severely wounded and there was now some pause in firing on this part of the line. Meantime, the other regiments of the brigade, Twentieth Wisconsin, Twenty-third Iowa, and Ninety-fourth Illi-

nois, came up, and Granger also came on the ground. Another advance was soon ordered. The Twentieth Wisconsin, Lieut.-Col. Starr, had formed on the right of the Nineteenth Iowa, and both regiments pushed forward over the slashed trees, but could not move fast. The confederates from the fort, and their advanced rifle-pits, were on the watch, and when they had gained about two hundred yards opened fiercely on them with musketry and artillery. To this fire they replied with spirit, and Foust's unmerring guns in the rear were doing execution at every shot. In close musketry range of McDermett, both regiments began to construct rifle-pits, and pickets were posted on the farther side of a ravine which extended on the right nearly up to the road; their post being close to rifle-pits from which the confederates had been driven. In the Nineteenth Iowa, Corporals Geo. Major and Wm. Holliday, and Private Montgomery, were killed, and Corporal Fish of the color guard, and Corporals Loyle and Smith, and ten privates, were wounded. Capt. Stone of the Twentieth Wisconsin, a gallant officer and gentleman, was mortally wounded.

By dusk, the general line of the Thirteenth corps was established from eight hundred to one thousand yards from the main works of the confederates, and after dark large details were set at work intrenching; and along the whole line the spade, the pick, and the axe, were busily employed.

During the day, Granger with a staff-officer rode along the line of skirmishers, attracting a fire which struck down the orderly bearing the corps colors.

The number of killed and wounded in the Sixteenth corps were ninety-one; in the Thirteenth something less. According to the report telegraphed to Mobile, the confederates sustained a loss of only nine killed and thirty wounded. The garrison had been expecting an assault, and were saving the most of their fire for such an emergency. At four in the afternoon, Gen.

Gibson reported: "Enemy seem to be attacking here in earnest, and has opened on every part of the line, with musketry and light artillery."<sup>1</sup> Canby, however, did not intend to assault blindly; nor would there have been much gained in point of time, for the army would have had to wait a few days for supplies before moving farther. He accompanied the troops in the movement and established his headquarters on the main road, near Wilson's, two miles from Spanish fort.

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<sup>1</sup> *Gibson to Lidell*: "March 27, 5:30 P. M.—We require more tools. Will send off horses and mules by first boat to-night. Enemy has established himself in heavy force from the extreme left to the right, has heavy batteries along his whole line. The works are not complete on the left."



## CHAPTER VIII.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—SECOND DAY.

*March 28.*—The garrison of Spanish fort comprised about four thousand. Col. Patton had command of the artillery which was also armed with rifle muskets, and did duty in the pits; Gibson's brigade was in the centre; and the Alabama reserves—principally youths, under General Thomas, were on the left. And there were batteries under skilful artillerists distributed at the forts on the entire line.

The garrison now saw they were to be regularly besieged by a large force, but were determined to hold out as long as they could without unreasonable sacrifice, and were inspired with the pride and satisfaction of holding at bay a powerful and finely-equipped army.

In the morning the public animals were shipped off, and renewed efforts made for additional tools. On the extreme left the defences were not finished, and these had been worked upon through the night, and were being continued. On that part of the line, on the preceding day, a party of blacks had been at work behind the skirmishers felling trees for an abatis in front of the main works; but ran in before the skirmishers, and having got too "demoralized" to be useful in the garrison, were sent to Fort Huger.

The work went on actively in completing platforms for the guns, making revetments for the breastworks and embrasures, and bomb-proof quarters for officers and men. These latter were along close to the main works. But more of this neces-

sary work could have been done if there had been a larger supply of tools.<sup>1</sup>

The besiegers, as well as the garrison, were experienced in such operations, and their practice on the late march had given them fresh facility in constructing earthworks. The red lines of earth—which will there remain for years to come—began to appear astonishingly quick; and they were, indeed, needed as a barrier against the subtle Minie-balls of the garrison sharpshooters, who, to use a phrase that was soon current along the line, “shot to kill.”

In the rear, the pioneer companies of each division, with details, were making gabions and fascines, levying heavily on the forest for its withes and poles. The abundance of pine-trees, many of which had been felled to impede them, largely assisted the men in making their bomb-proof quarters, and the revetments for batteries.

There had been occasional shots during the night; but when day broke, the crack of the musket grew vehement, and the artillery opened with spirit on both sides. The garrison, the day

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<sup>1</sup> *Gibson to Lidell*: “*March 28.*—The enemy attempted to advance his lines at sunset, but was wholly unsuccessful. He is persistent in his attempt to gain all the ground he can, and fails at every point. I am compelled to extend my lines on the left. I lost five (5) men killed and thirty-four (34) wounded to-day. I attribute the loss to the want of tools to throw up skirmish-pits and traverses. I have an immense deal of digging to do, as the enemy are erecting heavy batteries on the right and left, which enfilade the lines. Three (3) of his gun-boats ran on the bar, fired at the fort about sunset; all but one retired after a few rounds. We all think that the one that remained was sunk. I cannot say certainly, but I think so.”

*Lidell to Col. Garner (Chief of Staff)*: “*Blakely, March 28.* . . . . Gen. Gibson telegraphs that his force cannot be reduced, and should only be relieved. Enemy pressing him in heavy force at all points. His casualties are less than yesterday. I despatched him, boat would be sent for reserves to-night. He reports present strength at three thousand four hundred. I send two Yankee prisoners, who belong to Gilbert's division, at Sibley's mill. There are not enough boats here for the work they have to do, and they never have enough wood. Please send me more at once.”

and night preceding, had made an opening in the timber to the shore of Minette bay, to afford an enfilading range on the right flank of the Sixteenth corps, from the heavy guns of Fort Huger, situated on the marsh twenty-five hundred yards distant on the left and rear of the garrison. The fire from these guns appeared effective at first, but one of the shot having struck inside the garrison, it was ordered to cease.

*Sixteenth Corps.*—The Fourteenth Indiana (Morse's) light battery—Carr's division—had, on the evening of the 27th, advanced to a prominent and exposed position, where a mortar battery of the First Indiana heavy artillery afterward came in, five hundred and fifty yards from Red fort. The Fourteenth, aided by details of infantry, had worked all night throwing up works; but the earth on that ridge was very hard, and by morning only a few logs were rolled together with scarcely enough earth to cover them. In pursuance of orders, however, Capt. Morse opened fire at daylight, and was speedily answered by Phillips' Tennessee and Lumsden's Alabama light batteries, in his front, which concentrated their fire on him. Morse continued firing till ten o'clock, when he ceased, so as to give the pioneers opportunity to strengthen the work, and while this was in progress the work was penetrated by a shell, which exploded, killing one man and fatally wounding another. The other light guns on the left, in the front of both corps, were also engaged, but much exposed; yet batteries for them were in progress.

In the morning, an examination of the ground off from Carr's right, and along the eastern shore of Minette bay, showed that a battery could be placed on the bluff that would have a plunging fire on Huger. A Whitworth and a steel rifle were put in position there, which drew the fire that had been renewed of Huger from the right flank of the Sixteenth corps, and also moved farther up the river a confederate gunboat, which had also been hurling at A. J. Smith's command large and demoralizing projectiles.



The nature of the ground was such that on the extreme right of Smith's corps the One Hundred and Eighth Illinois—Geddes' brigade of Carr's division—was able to commence a parallel on a ridge two hundred yards distant from the confederate works ; and which, when finished, bent round to within one hundred and twenty yards of the confederate works. Toward the left the distance widened, the parallel commenced by the Eighth Iowa and One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois being a little over three hundred yards distant. Next in Moore's brigade the first line was three hundred and fifty yards distant, and in Ward's brigade five hundred. By daylight Moore's brigade had its first parallel opened, and some cover thrown up for the skirmish line one hundred and fifty yards in advance. The loss during the day in Geddes' brigade was two wounded in the One Hundred and Eighth Illinois ; two—one dangerously—in the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois ; in the Eighth Iowa, David Sterrett, Company K, was killed, and Mandres, Company I, and Herzberger, Company G, wounded. In Moore's brigade, four were wounded in the Thirty-third Wisconsin, one in the Seventy-second Illinois, and four—one dangerously—in the Ninety-fifth Illinois. In Ward's brigade, four—one dangerously—were wounded in the Fourteenth Wisconsin, five—two dangerously—in the Fortieth Missouri. Also, among the wounded was Lieut. Joseph H. Mitchell, Company A, Forty-ninth Missouri.

The preceding night, in the front of the Fortieth Missouri two colored men deserted from the garrison, and coming toward the picket of the Fortieth, were ordered to halt. One got frightened and ran, but the sentinel quickly fired, and he fell. The other came safely in, and the wounded one was sent to the hospital.

In McArthur's division the casualties were : in McMillen's brigade, two wounded in the Thirty-third Illinois ; in Hubbard's brigade, one wounded in the Ninth Minnesota ; in Marshall's brigade, two wounded in the Thirty-third Missouri, one in the

Twelfth Iowa, and Corporal Dreauler of the Seventh Minnesota. Company D, Capt. Norman Buck, of the latter regiment was on the skirmish line, and occupied ground three hundred and fifty yards from the confederate works.

*The Thirteenth Corps.*—In Krez's brigade, Benton's division, four companies from different regiments, under Captain James Gunn, Twenty-seventh Wisconsin, were sent out in daylight to relieve skirmishers of the Second (Day's) brigade who were in Krez's front. These companies had to cross a ravine containing a labyrinth of slashings, and which was commanded by the guns of McDermett and the sharpshooters posted in its front. But heedless of danger they made their way to the front as fast as possible, which could not be rapid even for sure-footed and athletic men; drove some of the confederate skirmishers out of their pits, and pushed on to within two hundred yards or thereabouts, of the confederate battery No. 3; but losing heavily. The detail from the Thirty-third Iowa had eight wounded, one mortally, and four dangerously; and among the wounded from that regiment were Capts. William S. Parmlee and George R. Ledyard. The Twenty-eighth Wisconsin lost one killed, Private Samuel D. Hogg, Company B, and six wounded, and the Twenty-seventh Wisconsin four wounded. So dangerous was it to retire or advance there in the daytime that some who were to be relieved preferred to remain in their pits in the front.

In Day's (Second) brigade, Company D, Capt. Geo. E. Croft, Seventh Vermont, had been on the skirmish line during the night and having pushed forward pretty close to the confederate works, was able to bring back valuable information concerning them. The skirmish line in front of Day's brigade was on the rise of ground before Battery No. 3, before mentioned, and so exposed to a raking fire of light guns that the men were in constant peril; for they were not yet well covered by works,



and had to seek shelter behind logs to some extent, rendering their line irregular.

At three in the morning, the Twenty-ninth Iowa—a regiment of splendid material and discipline to match—was relieved in the front, where it had been digging all night, by the Fiftieth Indiana—a regiment of the same distinguished merit, withdrew a few hundred yards to the rear, but not out of range, “and got something to eat, the first for nearly thirty-six hours,” and then soon returned and resumed the labors of the trenches.

Grier's (First) brigade was at work in the position taken the preceding evening.

In Veatch's division next on the left, Dennis' (Second) brigade was in the front, the skirmishers being engaged with but little intermission, and the fatigue parties exposed to considerable shelling.

*Attack on Captain Noble's Working Party.*—At dusk, Capt. J. L. Noble, of the Twenty-first Iowa, Slack's brigade, with one hundred men of the Twenty-first armed, and a detail of three hundred men from other regiments without arms, a strange oversight, went to the front to work on a battery. The detail crawled along cautiously to the place designated, and commenced work. Capt. Noble put out pickets in his front with instructions to report to him every five minutes. Soon the garrison sharpshooters heard the noise of the tools and commenced an unpleasant fire. The party kept at their work, and it seems that some of the detail had stuck their guns with the bayonets on into the ground. About midnight, in the midst of a heavy rainstorm, they were surprised and attacked, the confederates having approached slyly to within a very few yards of the work before being discovered. It was even doubtful for a few moments which side would get possession of the guns that were stuck in the ground. For a few minutes the combat was hand to hand. Capt. Noble called upon his men



to stand by him, which they did, with spirit, and kept their assailants out of the work. Many of the unarmed men ran back to camp, and some reported that Capt. Noble and his little band were captured. But Capt. Noble said they were mistaken, though he admitted that "at different times the rebs. were apparently standing guard over him." In about an hour Gen. Slack came out with his brigade to his relief, and the tide of the combat speedily turned. Capt. Noble had one man killed and five wounded, and a ball came so near himself as to burn his hair. He afterward learned from a confederate sergeant that the regiment that made the attack lost seven killed and fourteen wounded.

The attack was general on the skirmishers of Granger's left at the same time, but no ground was anywhere lost.

In Bertram's brigade, the Nineteenth Iowa was relieved in the morning by the Ninety-fourth Illinois, Col. John McNulta, which continued the work in the rifle-pits, and also sent three companies, under Capt. McFarland, to the front to support the Twenty-third Iowa.

*Operations of the Navy.*—The fleet, under Acting Rear-Admiral H. K. Thatcher, having several of the vessels that had gained renown under Farragut at Fort Morgan, had kept pace with the army up to the 26th. But Canby was disappointed in the expectation, that it might move up close to Spanish fort and complete the investment on the water side. Could this have been done the hours of Spanish fort would have been brief. But the shallow water on Blakely bar, the elaborate obstructions, and the torpedoes, prevented.

The confederates first caught sight of a portion of the fleet about five o'clock on the afternoon of the 26th, when it was off the mouth of D'Olieve's creek.

On the 28th, the fleet was lying off Howard's wharf. The pendant of the senior officer was flying from the Stockdale.

At midday the Octorara, Lieut.-Com. W. W. Low, and the river ironclad monitors, Milwaukie, Lieut.-Com. J. H. Gillis, the Kickapoo, Lieut.-Com. Jones, the Winnebago, Lieut.-Com. Kirkland, and the Chickasaw, got under weigh from the anchorage of the squadron and steamed for the bar of Blakely river. The ironclads passed successfully over the bar. But the Octorara took the ground on the ridge of the bar in eight feet of water. The tide had commenced falling; and at three o'clock, a tube having burst in her starboard boiler, further efforts to force her over ceased for the day. And, though she ultimately gained distinction, it seemed necessary that she should yield to that fate which rules in war, and often interposes a trivial accident to prevent unmixed success. The Winnebago and Milwaukie had Ead's turrets, admitting of an elevation to the guns of twenty degrees, and were permitted to advance. A trial shell was fired from the Winnebago when she was at the first rest, which showed she was much beyond the range of her guns from Spanish fort.

*Sinking of the Milwaukie.*—Both steamers continued up the Blakely river, to within about a mile and a half of Fort McDermott, and, with their XI-inch guns, threw some shells at a transport, supposed to be carrying supplies to the garrison, and compelled her to move up the river. Some shots were directed at Spanish fort, which were thought by the besiegers to have done good execution; and when the first shell came screeching up the bay, there was immense cheering all along their line. They then returned to anchor. The Milwaukie, dropping with the current, her bow headed up stream, had got within two hundred yards of the Kickapoo, then at anchor, and was where boats had previously swept for torpedoes, and where it was supposed there could be no danger from them. Just then a shock was felt on board, and it was known at once that a torpedo had exploded on her port side, abaft the after turret, and about forty



feet from the stern. The first object of the commander, after realizing the impossibility of saving the vessel, was to save the crew, which was happily done. There was some confusion at first, for the hatches were closed, and but three were provided with levers to open them from below ; but a single command restored order, and all came on deck in a quiet, orderly manner. The stern sank in about three minutes, but the forward compartments did not fill for nearly an hour afterward, giving the crew an opportunity of saving most of their effects. Lieut.-Com. Gillis saw every man off the vessel, and sent them to the Kickapoo. He then reported to the flagship, and obtained permission to proceed to Pensacola, to get divers and a steam-pump to aid in fetching up his guns.<sup>1</sup> Col. McNulta's men, of the Ninety-fourth Illinois, up in front of McDermott, looked on the Milwaukie from the rifle-pits, after the accident, and said that her flag was still waving, and that her men, standing in water, were firing effective shots from her turret guns. And the officers of the garrison strained their eyes to see whether she had sunk or not.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lieut. Gillis' Report, March 30, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> "Skirmishing and artillery fire open lively on both sides as soon as light enough for good practice. Battery Huger opens on the enemy's right with good effect, but is stopped on account of an accidental shot having fallen in our lines.

"Fire on both sides abates toward midday. Opens again, very lively, about three, P. M. The enemy's line is well established along our entire front, and, as usual, the work seems to progress very rapidly at all points ; ours, but moderately. Two monitors open fire on Spanish fort about five, P. M., but their shots fall a little short. They are answered by Spanish fort, and one suddenly ceases. Heavy fighting on our left toward dark. The enemy attempted to advance his pickets without success. Large fleet lying off Blakely bar."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*



## CHAPTER IX.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—THIRD DAY.

*March 29—Operations of the Navy.*—Those who merely consider the brilliant results of military or naval operations know little of the tugging toil which generally attends their achievement. An example of this toil was seen in the experience of the fleet.

The Octorara (as also the Metacomet) was a side-wheel steam-gunboat of the style familiarly called "double-ender," having bow and stern constructed alike, of draught of from eight to ten feet of water, and fore-and-aft schooner-rigged. She carried two IX-inch guns, two thirty-two-pounders, and four twenty-four-pounder howitzers, as broadside, and one one-hundred-pounder Parrott rifle, and one IX-inch smooth-bore as pivots; with gun crews for the larger guns of seventeen men each. Her disabled boiler had been repaired, and she had been considerably lightened by shifting sand-bags, shot, and shell, and four heavy guns—weighing each nine thousand six hundred pounds—on board tugs—the gaff of a tug being used as a derrick. And at noon, the 29th, with the assistance of two tugs, she passed over the Blakely bar, and anchored inside. The same evening the hundred-pounder Parrott was taken on board and mounted, and some shot and shell received from the tugs. But she did not open fire till the next day.

Heavy details from the squadron in boats had been industriously sweeping the channel with chains for torpedoes, and many had been brought up.

*Sinking of the Osage.*—At two, P. M., of the 29th, the ironclad Osage, Lieut.-Com. Wm. M. Gamble, was lying at anchor inside of Blakely bar in company with four other vessels. A strong breeze was blowing from the eastward, and the Winnebago had dragged close alongside. To avoid collision the Osage weighed anchor, moved off to a safe distance on her starboard bow, was stopped by her commander in two fathoms water, and hands ordered ready to let go the anchor. Almost immediately a torpedo exploded under the bow, and the Osage commenced filling and sinking rapidly. But search below for the killed and wounded was speedily made by executive officer Garrison with some men, and two killed and five wounded were passed up. Five were killed and twelve wounded. The Osage almost immediately filled. Her position had been thoroughly dragged by boats; and it was supposed the torpedo which struck her was drifting.

*Position of the Confederate Artillery.*—Twenty-one batteries had been sent down from Hood's (or Johnston's) army to help defend Mobile. Some of these had lost, and some had worn out their guns and material in resisting Sherman. Many of the companies had served from the commencement of the war, and had left dead comrades on more than a dozen great battle-fields, and now they were in conflict again with men, whom, in more hopeful days, they had met at Shiloh and Vicksburgh.

Of these organizations the principal one was the Twenty-second regiment Louisiana artillery, commanded by Col. Isaac Patton, a native of Virginia, and a graduate of West Point. He had command of the artillery at Spanish fort and Forts Huger and Tracy, and the latter forts were garrisoned mainly by companies from his regiment.

Fort Huger and Tracy were a thousand yards apart, built on the marsh, with piles driven for foundation; were from one to two miles above Spanish fort, and about the same distance from the

main shore. As has been before remarked, they were designed to command Blakely river; and it was an opinion expressed by Beauregard that they should be made self-sustaining, and that no garrisons should be maintained on the main shore. Fort Huger was a work with four bastions, but open at the north end, was garrisoned by companies B and K of the Twenty-second Louisiana and Company C, First Mississippi light artillery, Capt. Collins—total, two hundred effective, and commanded by Maj. Washington Marks, of the Twenty-second Louisiana. It was armed with eleven guns; namely, one VIII-inch double-banded gun in the northeast bastion, one VI $\frac{4}{16}$ -inch Brooks rifle, and one X-inch mortar on east face; one VII-inch rifle at southeast bastion; one X-inch double-banded smooth-bore on south face; one VII-inch rifle on southwest bastion; one VI $\frac{4}{16}$ -inch Brooks rifle on west face; two twelve-pounder howitzers. In the centre was a bomb-proof, twenty-five feet high, on which were mounted on pintels two splendid X-inch columbiads, smooth-bore, having, of course, a wide range.

Fort Tracy was an enclosed bastioned work, garrisoned by Companies I, H, and G, of the Twenty-second Louisiana—one hundred and twenty men, under the immediate command of Capt. A. A. Patsmier, Company I of that regiment, and armed with five VII-inch rifle guns.

It was supposed these forts would be assaulted by men landed from boats and launches, and the garrisons were exercising much vigilance to be ready to repulse them.

Old Spanish fort, sometimes denominated the Water-battery, was garrisoned by Companies A, D, and F, of the Twenty-second Louisiana, and well armed with VII-inch columbiads and thirty-pounder Parrotts—five in all.

Fort McDermott was under the immediate command of Capt. Samuel Barnes, Company C, Twenty-second Louisiana, and the artillery was manned by his own and Owen's Arkansas battery—



effective of both companies, ninety-one; but it was reinforced on the following day by Massenbery's Georgia light artillery, one hundred and ten effective. It had, at first, fifteen guns; six six-pounder smooth-bore; two twenty-four-pounder howitzers; six cohorn mortars; and one VI $\frac{4}{10}$ -inch Brooks rifle, mounted on centre-pintel, and having a range of three quarters of the circle of the besiegers' works.

Its south bastion was a lunette of strong profile, a command of twenty-five degrees over ridge and road approaching it, a regular covered way with four embrasures, a carefully-constructed abatis and chevaux-de-frise, and many torpedoes made with twelve-pounder shell. With the exception of old Spanish fort, which, from its position, was unassailable, this south bastion was decidedly the strongest and most carefully fortified fort of the garrison works.

Captain C. H. Slocum had command of the other batteries on the left. His quarters were at the redoubt No. 3, where was also his company—the fifth of the Washington artillery—ninety effective, composed of the best class of young men of New Orleans. During the war Slocum's battery had marched six thousand miles. This redoubt (No. 3) was armed with eight pieces: one VIII-inch columbiad, two Napoleons, one III-inch rifle, and four cohorn mortars.

At Redoubt No. 4 was Phillips' Tennessee battery, sixty effective, with two Napoleons, one twelve-pounder howitzer, and two cohorn mortars. Next, on the left of Redoubt No. 5, was Lumsden's Tuscaloosa (Alabama) battery, with four six-pounders, and three cohorn mortars.

The whole number of guns, including mortars, in all the works, the first days of the siege, was fifty-seven.

*Operations along the Lines.*—The firing on both sides this day seems to have increased in severity. It made Gen. A. J. Smith move his headquarters a little to the rear. The garrison ex-

pended not less than thirty-six thousand rounds of musket ammunition, and its own loss was reported to be thirty killed, and one hundred and nineteen wounded.<sup>1</sup> It now commenced the use of steel screens in the embrasures.

On the left of the besiegers Bertram's brigade had advanced some distance farther than the division on the right, leaving its right flank exposed. At seven in the afternoon, seven companies of the Twenty-ninth Illinois (third brigade of Veatch's division), under Maj. E. P. Curtis, went out to the front to open a line of works connecting with Bertram's right. They had but fairly begun digging when a superior number of the garrison made a sally on them, under cover of the darkness, rushing boldly and impetuously up to the trenches as if sure of success. A similar attack was made at the same time in Bertram's advance, but the working parties repulsed the attack, and resumed their work. About the same time the Eighth Illinois, Dennis' brigade, had one man killed and three wounded while working on a battery.

*Adventure on the Skirmish Line.*—In Day's brigade, Benton's division, Capt. L. K. Myers, Twenty-ninth Iowa, had the preceding evening been detailed as brigade officer of the day in the trenches. He had four companies, and was required to advance and dig rifle-pits within one hundred yards of the confederate works—then occupied by Gibson's Louisiana brigade, Col. Campbell commanding; the men having one day's rations and one hundred rounds of ammunition each. Soon after nightfall, with Lieut. Stocker and six or seven men, he went

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<sup>1</sup> *Capt. Lewis to Col. Garner*: "Blakely, Mar. 29.—Gen. Gibson reports the following casualties: thirty killed, one hundred and nineteen wounded."

A soldier of the Sixty-second Alabama (Col. Huger's regiment), writing from Spanish fort, March 29, to the Mobile Register, says: "Fortunately we are so situated our casualties are but few." He states that in his regiment up to date one commissioned officer and four men had been killed, and twenty-four wounded.



forward to ascertain how close he was to the confederate works, and was fired on by one of their sentinels when within five or six steps from him. Capt. Myers and party dropped down, and quite a number of shots were fired over them. He whispered orders for each man to crawl back singly, and then crawled back himself. Each one was heard and fired at while thus retreating, but none hit.

Capt. Myers' detail was at work through the night digging their line of rifle-pits, only fifty yards distant from the advance rifle-pits of the confederates and were being fired on by the latter, continually. The captain had repeatedly passed along the line of his four companies during the night, and toward morning, thinking they were safely intrenched, had started back to the main line of the brigade to report his situation, when he met a lieutenant of his own regiment with seven men bringing out ammunition for a company (C), that had come with less than the required supply. The men bringing it had carelessly been sent without arms. He turned back to conduct them to the line and came to a pit—for the pits were detached—next to the one where the ammunition was to go, and a "sentinel" pointed him the way. In passing along the line at night he had been guided by a lone tree standing where Company C was stationed; but approaching from the front it was hid, being between him and the high ground in front, and there being another tree more to the right, he followed that and came out unexpectedly on the confederate lines. His adventure was told as follows:

"I had ordered the lieutenant and seven men to keep in single file, behind me, and make but little noise in passing through the brush and fallen timber. As I approached I said: 'Boys, I am coming back again.' A voice answered, 'Come on.' A few steps more brought me face to face with a reb. in gray, with sword at his side, and at his left about twelve men (butternut clothing) with arms at a ready. As I halted, my men



closed up to my right, placing us all within three or four steps of the rebs. We all saw at once where we were. I was wearing a red sash, belt, and revolver; and my men all unarmed. The rebel officer looked me close in the face, and said: 'Do you know where you are—do you belong to us?' I answered 'Of course we belong to you, ain't you confederate soldiers?' He answered 'Yes.'

"I asked, 'What regiment?'

"He answered, 'Forty-second.'

"I said, 'We are bringing out ammunition, and wish to pass down the line with it, if you will direct us the way to the next post.'

"He asked, 'What regiment?' but I began to ask several other questions and each time set in before he finished, by making remarks such as, 'We heard so much firing during the night, thought you might be scarce of ammunition—were sent out with a supply, wish to pass down the line if you will direct us to the next post.' He said, 'We will show you the way, it is not far;' and turning to his men, said, 'Boys, all of you, come along.' I said, 'Very well,' and turning to my men said, 'Come on, boys.'

"I had feared that some of my boys would run and the rest of us be fired on, but they all stood quiet, trusting me to manage affairs. I knew the reb. knew what we were, and was afraid to order us to surrender; perhaps wanted to first double his force at the next post. I wanted to get on the move, and give the word to my men to run. We had only gone a few steps when one of the rebs. next the officer said, 'Hold on, these are not our men!' I said, 'You are certainly mistaken;' and while trying to satisfy him, the officer became too much alarmed to stand it any longer. He sang out, 'Retreat,' turned and ran, and his men broke and ran; most of them discharging their guns at me before running. The balls

passed close on both sides of me. I called out, 'Fire on them, boys, fire on them!' Did this to hurry them in their retreat. I also drew my revolver and fired four shots. By this time my men had got started back. I turned to follow them, and was about to run on to their (confederate) advance sentinel, who was squatting down in the brush, and raised and fired, when I was within two or three feet of the muzzle of his gun, hit me in the right hip, the ball hitting the bone, glancing round, and coming out about five inches from where it went in. I fell beside him, and as he turned to run, I gave him the two remaining shots from my revolver; he fell within a few steps of me and lay quiet. I lay there a few minutes, and the rebs., from their breastworks some fifty yards distant, poured a heavy fire into the brush. I could see day breaking fast, and knew they could soon see me. So I began to crawl off. Could not stand on my wounded leg. Soon came to one of my boys, who had been with me and was lost in the brush. While he and I were cautiously making ourselves known to each other, two of our Company C boys, in their rifle-pits, raised their guns to fire at me, but their lieutenant (Stocker, one of my messmates) knew my voice, and told them not to fire. They then called me by name, 'Capt. Myers,' and the rebs., following up behind me, called, 'Come this way, Capt. Myers, come right this way.' Lieut. Stocker ordered a few shots fired at them, which stopped their hallooing, and I came into the rifle-pits with Lieut. Stocker, related my adventure, examined my wound, and was assisted back to my regiment.

"The man of my squad who carried the box of one thousand cartridges, threw it down before retreating, and the rebs., next day, were afraid to touch it, and would call out to our men in the rifle-pits to come and get that infernal-machine. When the fort was taken, my colonel sent and got the box. The rebs. would also call out, 'How is Capt. Myers?' Our men would

reply, 'He is not dangerous,' and then inquire about the officer who ran from unarmed men."

*Sixteenth Corps.*—In McArthur's division, Marshall's brigade continued to furnish large details on a battery for the Third Indiana light guns, and that brigade and Hubbard's had begun an approach from their main line. The casualties were light, not exceeding one or two in each regiment.

In Carr's division approaches were being dug, to connect Moore's first and second line—the Ninety-fifth Illinois, Col. Blanding, being at work on the left, and the Thirty-third Wisconsin upon the one on the right. All the works were progressing fast. The sharpshooters were able to silence the guns in their front, and the casualties of the division were light.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'Wednesday, March 29.—Operations commenced very lively on both sides. Casualties on ours severer than heretofore. I made a careful inspection of both lines. Estimate the enemy's line of circumvallation at one thousand to twelve hundred yards distant—his skirmishers vary from two hundred and fifty to three hundred yards distant. Eight batteries established against us; but our artillery still seems to be superior, and generally silences theirs whenever we try to do so. Our line as yet uninjured. The monitor that engaged Spanish fort yesterday seems to be sunk on Blakely bar. Commenced to use steel-wrought iron screens in our embrasures, for protecting artillerists, and find them of general service. The usual work of repairs, and making splinter-proofs, traverses, and passage-ways, carried on; also, work on treadway pushed ahead. A lively skirmish takes place on our right, about midnight, resulting from some false alarm on one side or the other.'—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*



## CHAPTER X.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—FOURTH DAY.

*March 30.*—The fourth day was devoted chiefly to work in the trenches on the part of the besiegers. The pits had been dug hastily, and were narrow; in many places the sides were not well sloped but abrupt, so that a heavy storm would crumble them in. Orders were given to have them rectified, and widened to six feet. This was undertaken, but retarded for want of tools. The heavy siege guns were now on their way up the bay, and several batteries were also commenced for them. Foust's light battery of steel guns, on the extreme left, had done excellent service; and his ammunition being exhausted—but not his zeal—he withdrew, and gave place to four III-inch rifle-guns, of Storer's Seventh Massachusetts, which were moved from the right of Veatch's division—the section of twelve-pounders of the latter battery, under Lieut. Benson, remaining in their original position.

Four light guns, of Trull's Fourth Massachusetts battery, were on Veatch's left, and only four hundred and fifty yards from Fort McDermott—so near, indeed, that the men could hear the music of a brass band inside that fort. These guns were doing some good service. The other section of the battery, under Lieut. Briggs, had been sent to the extreme left, to fire on the garrison's transports coming to the wharf.

Up to this time the besiegers had in use nine light batteries.

During this day a shell from Fort McDermott exploded in

the camp of the Twenty-ninth Illinois, killing four men and wounding nine others, all of Company A.

At three in the afternoon Veatch's division was withdrawn in order to proceed with a supply train to meet Gen. Steele; and his front was occupied by Marshall's brigade of the Sixteenth corps. The whole loss in Veatch's division had been nine killed and forty-one wounded.

In Day's brigade, Benton's division, the Twenty-ninth Iowa was detached to the rear on picket duty.

In Carr's division a part of Moore's brigade front was severely enfiladed by guns off to his right, and which he could not reach; probably Lumsden's Tuscaloosa battery. The part of Moore's front which was most exposed to this fire was occupied by two companies of the Thirty-third Wisconsin: Company C, Capt. William Were, Company K, Capt. A. H. Fitch. These officers, with their companies, without flinching, held their position under a raking fire. The regiment had eleven wounded, six severely. But the guns that inflicted this injury were afterward silenced by a Rodman gun of the First Indiana light battery which, at night, was placed in a masked position in front of the first parallel of Moore's brigade.

The casualties in the two divisions during the day were five killed and twenty-six wounded.

On the extreme left the Louisianians, at about one in the morning, made another attack on Bertram's brigade front then occupied by the Ninety-fourth Illinois, Col. McNulta. The Nineteenth Iowa came up promptly to the assistance of the Ninety-fourth, and the sally party was driven back before approaching nearer than fifty yards, leaving nine dead which were buried by the Ninety-fourth. The loss of the Nineteenth and Ninety-fourth was three wounded.

*The Navy.*—During the afternoon the Octorara opened with effect with her one hundred-pounder Parrott on Spanish fort, at a distance of five thousand seven hundred yards.

*The Garrison.*—The commanding officer of the district, Maj.-Gen. D. H. Maury, visited the garrison, examined the lines and concluded to relieve Thomas' reserves with Holtzclaw's Alabama brigade.<sup>1</sup> In the evening Lidell sent two regiments of Cockrell's division to O. Sibley's to relieve Holtzclaw. The latter called in his pickets, and about midnight his brigade was wending its way over Saluda hill and down the Pensacola road to Blakely landing, where it embarked on the steamers Mary and Red Gauntlet for Spanish fort.

The casualties at Spanish fort, on the 30th, were reported to be six killed and forty wounded. But it is probable the lists of casualties could not always be accurate. Once the Nineteenth Iowa, on the extreme left of the besiegers, in extending their approach, dug into a confederate rifle pit where they found two or three confederates who had fallen at their posts some time previously, and been left unburied by their comrades. The garrison during the day advanced the work on the treadway over the marsh to Fort Huger.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Gibson: "Blakely, March 30.*—Gen. Maury has again ordered me to relieve the reserve brigade. I send Holtzclaw's brigade to relieve them, and you must have the reserves ready to be placed on the boat as soon as Holtzclaw arrives. This must be done under cover of darkness without fail."

<sup>2</sup> *"Thursday, March 30.*—Enemy very quiet all day. But one piece of artillery fired along the entire line, and but little sharpshooting. The line is visited and examined by the major-general commanding. A monitor opens in the evening on our hospital boat. Picket lines of two forces not more than fifty paces apart in several places. Our treadway to Huger nearly finished. Enemy opens a Parrott battery across Bay Minette on Batteries Huger and Tracy, and on boats attempting to land at those points, thus stopping our steamboat communication with these points to-day."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*



## CHAPTER XI.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—FIFTH DAY.

*March 31.*—Details from Carr's division had constructed a sunken battery on the shore of Bay Minette near the Whitworth and the steel gun already in position. Eight thirty-pounder Parrotts, of Battery H, First Indiana heavy artillery, Capt. W. P. Wimmer, and Battery K, Capt. Cox, had been placed there the night before, and in the morning opened on some ironclads and transports which were lying with steam up near Forts Huger and Tracy. Two side-wheelers and a transport were in a few minutes compelled to move up stream; but the fourth vessel was of the turtle-back description, and though repeatedly hit by solid shot remained under fire until evening. About one, P. M., a transport attempted to pass down to the fort, but was driven back. The forts were continually signalling, and twice in the following night a transport attempted to run down to them, but was driven back each time. Fort Huger answered the fire of these thirty-pounders briskly, but they sustained no injury.

Capt. W. H. Blankenship, of the First Indiana heavy artillery, with his battery (B), eight VIII-inch mortars, had arrived at Stark's wharf the night of the 28th, and, by working all night in the heavy rain, got his battery on the top of the hill. The 29th, he moved out near Gen. A. J. Smith's headquarters. The 30th, the battery was divided, forty men and four mortars, under Lieut. Raper, being sent to the extreme left; with fifty men and the other four mortars he proceeded to Carr's division; and at

three, A. M., of the 31st, had the mortars in position on a knoll in rear of the left of Geddes' brigade (Battery No. 18), nine hundred yards from Red fort, but only six hundred from the main works of the garrison in his immediate front. He commenced firing at eight o'clock, and fired thirty-eight rounds.

In Granger's front, Capt. Bough (Battery C, First Indiana) got his VIII-inch howitzers in position on the brow of a hill eight hundred yards from McDermett, and delivered an accurate fire. There was a brisk engagement of the batteries on both sides all along the line.

Morse's Fourteenth Indiana light battery, at Carr's left, though its works had been strengthened, was much annoyed by Slocum's columbiad, from which shells (weighing over fifty pounds) had been coming with their dismal flutter and with disagreeable precision. About ten, A. M., one of these shells struck a limber of the Fourteenth battery, and, igniting the contents (eighty pounds of powder), blew it in pieces, killing one man, seriously wounding two, and slightly wounding several others. During the day, another man of the battery was dangerously wounded by a Minie-ball.

The First and Third Indiana and Second Iowa light batteries were also actively engaged in the Sixteenth corps' front, and suffering but little.

In the Thirteenth corps, the chief engineer, Col. Palfrey—son of the historian—designated the siege guns to be put in position, with orders that twelve large rifle guns should be placed to give a reverse and enfilade fire on the left of the garrison's line, in front of the Sixteenth corps. Capt. Van Lieu and Capt. Morton, of the Ninety-seventh United States colored infantry, were assigned to duty with the corps as assistant-engineers. The Seventh Vermont veteran infantry and the Thirty-fifth Wisconsin infantry, of Benton's division, were assigned to special duty on siege-works, were divided into four reliefs, to

work eight hours each in succession; and the two officers named above, with Capt. H. G. Palfrey, Ninety-eighth United States colored infantry, with the assistant-engineer of the division, in whose front the work lay, formed a roster, one being on duty with each detail in succession.

On the right of the Thirteenth corps, the Twenty-first and Twenty-sixth New York light batteries maintained the battle against large projectiles well, and were the theme of praise among the infantry regiments around them. In the Twenty-first, Privates John Wilson and John Daley had been killed, and Private George A. White wounded—the first casualty on the 27th, the two last on the 29th. On Granger's left, the four light guns of Trull's Fourth Massachusetts battery were withdrawn, to give place to Mack's (Black-horse battery) eighteen-pounders. In Bertram's front, two of the VIII-inch (sixty-four-pounders) mortars of Battery B, First Indiana heavy artillery, opened on Fort McDermett.<sup>1</sup>

*A Gallant Exploit.*—The hulk of a steamboat, used as quarters at Fort Huger, having been cut loose to give range to guns, floated down and lodged diagonally opposite McDermett, and about five hundred yards distant. In a few minutes Lieut. Ridnour, acting aide-de-camp, with Sergeant Charles Ashby, Company G, and Privates Wm. H. Morgan and A. C. Spreadan, of Company A, Louis Roy, Company B, and Robert Pratt, Company C, of the Ninety-fourth Illinois, paddled out in a small skiff to examine it. Some of the squadron, at first suspecting them to be from the garrison, commenced shelling them, but, by signals, were soon made to cease. The garrison then

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<sup>1</sup> *Gen. Lidell to Col. Garner: "Blakely, March 31.*—Gen. Gibson reports the enemy have erected a battery of heavy guns in front of Battery McDermett (No. 2). Have fired a sixty-four-pounder. Artillery officers report a Parrott battery in front of No. 2. Opened also thirteen guns on Battery No. 4, and fired cohorn mortars on the left."



opened fire on them from all the guns bearing in that direction, and with musketry. But they made their way through the shower of shot and shells to the object of their trip, coolly boarded and examined it, returned to their skiff and paddled themselves back, but now under cover of the fire from the squadron. None of them was harmed, though their skiff was hit a number of times. And as they came back they were greeted by the loud cheers of thousands of their comrades, who stood watching them from the bluff. The garrison also beheld and admired their gallantry.

*Sortie and Capture of Skirmishers.*—On the night of the 30th, Capt. R. B. Stearns, Company K, Seventh Vermont, with a part of his company, had relieved Capt. Parker's company on the skirmish line in front of the confederate battery No. 3. There was a little firing during the night, and Capt. Stearns advanced his line about twenty-five yards, and dug new pits—though there was only one spade found by the detail—which brought him in advance of the brigade line of skirmishers. He was within one hundred and fifty yards of the works of the garrison, and the musket fire by his men was exceedingly troublesome to their gunners. Soon after noon a shot from that vicinity had instantly killed Col. Wm. E. Burnett, of Texas, confederate chief of artillery, and a valuable officer. He had for a moment taken a rifle in his hand, and was in the act of aiming it from behind the breastworks through a wooden embrasure. Capt. Barnes in Battery McDermott had been giving considerable attention to these skirmishers, and they were also subject to a fire from Red fort. Beginning early in the morning Barnes shelled the line with a six-pounder and a twenty-four-pounder howitzer for three or four hours, and made some of the men on Stearns' left fall back into the ravine. There was now a lull, and the skirmishers popped out their heads and did some firing them-

selves, for they were fair marksmen, and had plenty of pluck. Barnes then brought out two six-pounders from McDermett, placed them on the hill-top, and again fiercely shelled Capt. Stearns' position. The latter concluded it would be best to fall back a short distance as soon as it became dark, and sent Corporal Crothers to regimental headquarters for instructions. He also sent word that he expected to be assaulted before dark, asked that the guns over at McDermett be silenced, and the works of the garrison in his front be shelled, so that he could fall back under cover of the fire. The severe fire which Capt. Stearns was exposed to had already attracted the attention of Col. Holbrook, the commanding officer of his regiment.

Arrangements were made in the garrison for a sortie. Capt. Clement Watson of Gen. Gibson's staff volunteered to lead it. The rest of the party was to consist of Lieut. A. C. Newton, Company E, Fourth Louisiana battalion, and thirty men, fifteen of whom were picked.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, preparatory to the sortie, the garrison caused the slashings and brush on the right of Capt. Stearns to be fired, and the smoke blew over and in front of him.

Having stood the terrific shelling, he was now most apprehensive of being burned or smoked out, for there were several trees near him, and the wind was sending the fire in his direction. He gave the order for his men to fall back singly. But a hundred bullets came flying at the first man who started, and Capt. Stearns immediately countermanded the order. During the severe shelling a few of his men had retreated from their rifle-pits, one of whom, Private Stoors, was wounded. Just before sunset the fire had extended along his rear and on his left, making so dense a smoke as to entirely seclude him. But the guns of the garrison were still bearing on him and now opened in a terrific manner. In less than ten minutes fifteen shells



were exploded inside, and directly over the single pit in which Capt. Stearns and ten of his men were stationed. Still expecting an assault he ordered his men to fix bayonets.

It was now sunset. The cannonading ceased. The same instant Capt. Watson and party were over the garrison works, and, concealed by the smoke, vigorously rushed upon their expected prisoners. Capt. Stearns gave the command to fire, which was obeyed by a majority of his men. The next moment every man had a musket at his head, with a summons to surrender. The demand was complied with. Capt. Stearns and twenty of his men were captured. Without parley and without delay, their captors received their arms and hurried them away into the garrison. None of the sortie party stopped to occupy the pits.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were rapidly taken a roundabout way to a position near the water, which appeared to be sheltered from the fire of the besiegers by artificial ravines. But no curiosity now inspired them to notice the interior of the garrison. They were confident their gallant comrades left behind would, before many days, have full possession of everything around them; and the regret that they could not be present to participate in the enthusiasm of victory, increased that distress of mind which is ever experienced by the patriotic prisoner. The prospect before them was dreary.

Capt. Stearns was soon notified that he was to have an interview with the general commanding the garrison; and was accordingly conducted down into a ravine some sixty or seventy feet deep, and about thirty yards wide at the opening. The

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<sup>1</sup> *Gen. Lidell to Col. Garner (Chief of Staff)*: "Blakely, March 31.—Gen. Gibson has just telegraphed me the following: 'Capt. Clement S. Watson, of my staff, and A. C. Newton, Co. E, Fourth Louisiana battalion, led a sortie at sunset, and drove the enemy from his advance on battery 3, killed a large number, and captured one captain and twenty-one enlisted men. These brave comrades deserve the thanks, and have entitled themselves to the admiration, of this army.'"



ravine was triangular, with its base facing north. In the apex were two wall tents, into one of which he was taken and introduced to Gen. Gibson. There were present Capt. Watson and the lieutenant who accompanied him. The general invited Capt. Stearns to partake of his supper—a frugal repast, consisting of cold fowl, cold water, with tin table furniture. This invitation was accepted. It was a compliment which would have been paid only to a gallant officer. The garrison had the best opportunity to judge of the courage and fortitude of their prisoners, and the general was generous in acknowledging the tenacity and courage with which, under a most severe fire, they held to their position; and the intelligence and address of both the captors and prisoners seems to have excited mutual respect.

After Capt. Stearns' interview with the general, and he had withdrawn from his tent, he had some conversation with persons of lower rank, from whom he learned that they had "lost heart" in the success of the Confederacy.<sup>1</sup>

The casualties of the garrison on the 31st were reported to be six killed and twenty-six wounded.

<sup>1</sup> "HEADQUARTERS FORCES, SPANISH FORT,  
" *March 31, 1865.*

"The commanding officer desires to make known to the troops his admiration of their unsurpassed valor and endurance, and his entire confidence in their ability to defend this outpost of the defences of Mobile.

"Thousands of your countrymen with anxious hearts turn toward you.

"Continue to prove yourselves worthy of their confidence, and of the cause which it is your privilege to defend.

"Resolve to do your whole duty, every hour of each coming day, and with the blessing of Heaven we shall continue to achieve those successes which so far have crowned your efforts.

"RANDALL LEE GIBSON,  
" *Brigadier General.*"

"Heavy firing around Spanish fort all day. Col. Burnett, chief of artillery to the major-general commanding, killed. Picket line of the enemy in front of our line on right centre dislodged and twenty-one prisoners captured with no

## CHAPTER XII.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—SIXTH DAY.

THERE was a feeling of despondency in Mobile, but it was not much shown. Some meetings were held to create a martial feeling among the citizens; the few able-bodied men who remained in the city were armed, did occasional duty as patrols or guards, and were expected if a crisis required to go into the trenches. Orders were published for the removal of the slaves out of the city. The people cooked and sent over provisions to the garrison, bestowed every attention upon the wounded, and manifested a devotion well calculated to keep up the resolution of their defenders. The daily newspapers were prohibited from publishing details of the operations and casualties, and confined what they published to general statements. "The enemy," they confessed "is strong, reliant, and ingenious." Yet they claimed that their defensive works were insurmountable. "But better," they argued, "than all these safeguards is the valor of our soldiers."

Owing to restrictions on the press only a few of the many letters written from the garrison were published. One correspondent said that his shoulder was lame from shooting—that he "he shot under a log which the boys called 'skull crackers.'" Another soldier correspondent, in not so good humor, wrote

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loss on our side. A very large work commenced in front of our left. No material advance since yesterday in the enemy's approaches. Enemy opens upon my engineer force on the marsh, and causes temporary discontinuance of work on treadway."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*

that there was an immense fleet in the bay; that the vessels contained the families of the Yankee officers impatient to occupy the fine houses in Mobile, and appropriate to themselves the furniture and costly wares.

*The Garrison (April 1).*—In compliance with special orders coffee and sugar were issued for the benefit of the wounded. It appears that the ordinary army rations issued to the garrison were meal and a poor article of bacon.

The brigade of Brig.-Gen. J. T. Holtzclaw, having relieved the Alabama reserves, was now in position on the left centre of the garrison.

This brigade had seen much hard fighting during the war; and its last important battle had been Nashville.

It was composed of the following organizations, all of Alabama troops: Fifty-eighth and Thirty-second, consolidated; the Thirty-sixth, Col. T. H. Hernden; the Eighteenth, Col. P. F. Hunley—Holtzclaw's old regiment, which had helped to capture the Eighth Iowa at Shiloh; the Twenty-first, Col. J. Williams, which had been badly cut up at Shiloh, then sent to Mobile, where it afterward remained; and the Thirty-eighth, commanded by Capt. Bussy, the colonel and major being prisoners.

The brigade was so posted that its right, consisting of the Thirty-eighth, came opposite the (garrison) battery No. 3, bringing it opposite the right of Benton's division. Next, on the left, were the Twenty-first and Eighteenth, reaching to Battery No. 4 (Red fort), then the Fifty-eighth and Thirty-sixth extending to the sand-bag battery; the four last being opposite McArthur's division. Next came Ector's Texas brigade. But Ector had lost a leg at Atlanta and had not yet resumed command. Its right was a North Carolina regiment, Col. Coleman; and next were posted the consolidated regiments, about four, fronting Carr's division. They had been



captured as cavalry at Arkansas post, and for eighteen months had served as infantry. Col. Andrews of Texas now commanded the brigade; Col. Bush Jones of the Fifty-eighth Alabama commanded Holtzclaw's brigade, and Holtzclaw commanded both brigades, comprising the left wing of the garrison.

The garrison did not as yet feel much pressed, but was obliged to work industriously. Orders were now issued to economize ammunition, and immediate leave of absence for twenty-four hours was promised each man who would procure twenty-five pounds of lead. This caused many hundred pounds of the besiegers bullets to be picked up.

On the right, in McDermott, Capt. Barnes received from Mobile, two twenty-pounder Parrotts, and one VIII-inch mortar. The latter was put in position one hundred yards inside the fort, on the interior slope of the hill. These increased the whole number of his pieces to eighteen.

To reinforce the garrison at Blakely, it was proposed to withdraw Ector's brigade from Spanish fort. But, on the urgent recommendation of Gibson and Holtzclaw, it was allowed to remain.<sup>1</sup>

The casualties of the garrison for this day were reported to be four killed and seventeen wounded.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Gibson*: "April 1.—Gen. Maury has ordered me to send no more men to Spanish fort, and to withdraw Ector's brigade. I do not know his object. Our lines are two thousand yards long, and I have not enough men here, by one thousand, to man our fortifications, and Steele's corps is reported to be larger than both corps in front of your works."

*Lidell to Maury*: "April 1.—The following despatch just received from Gen. Gibson: 'In the opinion of Gen. Holtzclaw and myself, the withdrawal of Ector's brigade renders Spanish fort untenable, with the small force, left against the large force, now pressing at every point. While this [is] my candid conviction, I will continue heartily and with renewed efforts to do my utmost to hold this place.' Signed, 'R. L. Gibson, Brig.-Gen.' Please decide this matter at once; the boats have gone to Spanish fort."

<sup>2</sup> "I made a careful examination of the lines at Spanish fort to-day. Our works show signs of injury on our right, but no damage, as yet, done to our

*Operations of the Besiegers.*—The captain of the steamer Mary had reported to Gen. Lidell, at Blakely, the effectiveness of the thirty-pounders (First Indiana) on the shore of Bay Minette; whereupon that indefatigable officer went out and selected a good position, on the north bank of the Minette bayou, for a light battery, which would give Wimmer and Cox a reverse and raking fire. In the night, two ten-pounder rifles, of Grayson's battery, moved out from Blakely and occupied the position, which was only about one thousand yards from the battery on Bay Minette shore. Scarcely any work was done, for it was unnecessary, as the position was masked by the woods; and, as Steele was approaching from the north, it was evident the guns could not remain there long. Grayson opened at daylight with the two rifled guns, and with decided effect. His firing was not wholly unexpected to Capt. Wimmer, for he had heard the noise of work in that direction the preceding night. Grayson kept up a constant and accurate fire, raking the Bay Minette battery from right to left. Wimmer had no protection on his right, and his magazine was exposed. Nor was he able to return Grayson's fire. He immediately commenced throwing up works to protect his magazine, his subordinate officers and men working with great intrepidity and zeal. All this while a heavy fire was going on between his guns and Fort Huger and the gunboat Morgan. At half-past four, p. m., he had constructed works to effectively secure his magazine,

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left. No signs of regular sapping on the part of the enemy, as yet; his approaches having been made up to this time by his skirmishers advancing themselves at night, and protecting themselves by irregular pits. Their proximity is such, in front of our salients, that I determine to try some countermines, and order preparation made to that end. Enemy opens several mortars on Spanish fort. Capt. Grayson's battery of Parrotts, and the confederate steamer Morgan, open fire on Bay Minette batteries. Enemy appears in front of Blakely, and captures about one hundred men of the Forty-sixth Mississippi regiment by a dash on our outpost."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*



and also got one gun in position to answer Grayson. But the latter had, by this hour, been called back with his guns inside the works at Blakely. It had been a furious day for Wimmer and Cox's batteries, yet they had but three men injured.

Capt. Blankenship commenced work with his VIII-inch and X-inch mortars (left of Geddes' brigade, Carr's division), at half-past seven o'clock, A. M.—fired fifteen rounds, and received orders to cease firing. At noon he opened again, and threw forty-seven shells into Red fort, out of fifty-one fired, dismounting a gun and killing two men. Late in the evening, he threw twenty-nine more shells inside the garrison works.

Hendrick's Battery L, First Indiana, having arrived the previous evening, two of his thirty-pounder Parrotts, under immediate command of Lieut. Parker, opened a direct fire, early in the morning, from McArthur's right, and were immediately answered by a concentrated fire from six guns, including one VIII-inch columbiad. Gun No. 3, Corporal James Busby, gunner, dismounted one of the garrison guns during the first day's firing.

Some brilliant shots were made by the III-inch rifles of the Seventh Massachusetts—they having struck the Brooks rifle, in Fort McDermett, five times while it was being fired twice.

Along the line, generally, there was not so much artillery firing as on the preceding day.

In the Thirteenth corps work was progressing on three heavy batteries—Nos. 1, 2, and 5. After dark Capt. Mack had his eighteen-pounders hauled into position with ropes, by hand, and got ready to open fire the following morning.

Bertram's brigade, on the left, was pushing its advance line up to McDermett rapidly, day and night. But it had some natural advantage in approaching under cover of the west slope of the bluff on which the extreme left of their line rested. This



afforded at least one approach ; yet the side of the bluff was steep, and considerable work had been done to excavate from its side a terrace-walk. Starting from the rear line, where the view of the bay and islands was extensive, the skirmishers went down a few steps to the terrace-walk, or covered way, and passing along that some hundreds of yards, they turned to the right, into an approach, and then, going another hundred yards, came into their present advance line of continuous rifle-pits, which was now less than two hundred yards from the guns of McDermett. This day the Ninety-fourth Illinois was on duty at the front, and one of its men (Thomas Wilson, of Company A) was killed.

Next, on the right of Bertram, was Marshall's brigade of the Sixteenth corps, occupying and advancing the works commenced by Veatch's division ; its right resting in the deep ravine which was in range of the guns of Old Spanish fort. Next, on the right, was Grier's brigade of Benton's division, in which Capt. G. G. Stearns, of the Seventy-seventh Illinois, and Campbell, of the Ninety-sixth Ohio, had been detailed to take charge of work in the trenches. The Twenty-eighth and Seventy-seventh Illinois were in front, and at night a sortie was made on their skirmish line, which was handsomely repulsed.

Next, on the right, Day's brigade (Benton's division) was reduced to two regiments, the Fiftieth Indiana and Ninety-first Illinois ; and on the right of that was the brigade of Col. Krez, whose skirmishers were holding an exposed position, and meeting with some loss.

The left of the Sixteenth corps was now Hubbard's brigade (McArthur's division), in whose front an approach had been extended to within two hundred yards of the main works of the garrison, and his second parallel there constructed. This was manned with two hundred and fifty of the best sharpshooters of the brigade, under charge of Capt. A. P. French,

Fifth Minnesota; the detail being permanent. The operations in that brigade were conducted with equal vigor and system. The loss in the brigade, during the day, was, in the Thirty-third Missouri, three killed and wounded, including Capt. W. Irwin; in the Fifth Minnesota, one wounded.

In McMillen's brigade, there was one killed in the Twenty-sixth Indiana, and one wounded in the Thirty-third Illinois.

In Carr's division, the works were also progressing with vigor. Moore's brigade, in the centre, at night, commenced work on a third parallel, thirty yards in advance of the second. The casualties in the division were two killed and eight wounded, two of the latter mortally.

*The Navy.*—On this day another vessel was sunk by a torpedo. At one, P. M., the tinclad steamer Rodolph, Acting Master N. M. Dyer, in obedience to signal from flagship, weighed anchor, passed within hail, and, receiving orders to take a barge alongside containing apparatus for raising the Milwaukie, proceeded with it inside the Blakely bar. The Rodolph had crossed the bar, and was standing up toward the wreck of the Milwaukie, when, at 2:40, P. M., being directly between the Chickasaw and Winnebago, she exploded a torpedo under her starboard bow, and rapidly sank in twelve feet of water. It appeared that a hole had been made in her ten feet in diameter. By this casualty four of her crew were killed and seven wounded, of whom five were colored men.

Here, for a short time, let us withdraw attention from the operations at Spanish fort, and observe the movement of Steele's column out from Pensacola.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### OPERATIONS OF STEELE'S COLUMN FROM PENSACOLA BAY.

MAJ-GEN. F. Steele arrived at Barrancas on the 28th of February, and assumed command of the troops operating from Pensacola bay. The Second and Third brigades of the Second division, Thirteenth army corps, with the Second Connecticut and Fifteenth Massachusetts light batteries, five thousand two hundred effective men, were already at that place and in readiness to march. A few days afterward Hawkins' colored division, five thousand five hundred effective, arrived, and by the middle of March, Lucas' cavalry brigade, two thousand five hundred, had landed. The whole force amounted to thirteen thousand two hundred.

Steele at once, in person, began a thorough inspection of his troops; taking one regiment at a time (formed in column of companies), and going through it examining the arms, accoutrements, and clothing of each soldier.

A heavy pontoon train had arrived, and Capt. Boyle of the Thirty-fourth Iowa drilled his company successfully in the practice of laying the bridge, but Gen. Steele wisely concluded to leave it behind.

On the 10th of March, the Second division got orders to move to Pensacola, and repair the wharf. This was in order that the place could be available as a depot and base, if subsequent operations should require it. The same afternoon the division commander went up to Pensacola in a tug and ascertained what work needed to be done.



At sunrise the next morning (March 11), the division was a mile from camp, just entering the woods on the eastern part of the peninsula, with the train of eighty wagons of supplies. The distance round the head of the bayou to Pensacola is thirteen miles, the road sandy and very heavy. It was the same road over which Jackson marched in 1818 with his army of three thousand men and two pieces of artillery. Some of the road was under water; and it was also necessary to construct a few small bridges. Two miles out of Pensacola, the road for several hundred yards was obstructed with slashings of pine-trees; but these were cut and rolled out of the way in a most rapid manner by the pioneer company, assisted by details from the column. The advance guard, consisting of a detachment of the Second Maine cavalry, entered the town soon after noon, and by three, P. M., the division was on its camping ground. The Second brigade (Spiceley's) camped on the ridge south of the old fort; the Third brigade (Moore's) camped on the level ground east of the railroad. The march had been pleasant and successful.

The next day, being Sunday, repairs of the wharf were not fully commenced, yet Mr. Gray, principal mechanic in the quartermaster's service, arrived from Barrancas with a detail of some fifty men from the colored regiment, with tools, and commenced taking up plank and caps from another wharf. The repairs that were to be made consisted chiefly in driving piles and making new wharf to fill up two gaps, each three hundred feet in length, in the central or main wharf. The next morning, seventy pine logs for piles were hauled from the neighboring woods to the wharf before eight o'clock; and during the day two hundred were cut and hauled; and also sharpened. Mr. Gray was assisted by the Pioneer corps and details from the division, and all engaged worked in an earnest-hearted manner. Nearly all the planks and caps needed were brought in boats from the

neighboring wharf; and one pile was nearly driven when the wind and waves rose and stopped the work. There being no pile-driver, the piles had to be worked into the ground by their own weight. For example, a pile having been placed upright, a rope was then made fast near the top; and while the pile was kept steady, it was swayed backward and forward by men pulling on two sides till it became firmly set in the ground.

The next day the storm continued and no work could be done. On the 15th it was resumed. It was also concluded to lay a railway track from the end of the wharf, when it should be repaired, up the main street as far as the quartermaster's and commissary's stores. Capt. McComas, acting engineer, and a detail from the Eighty-third Ohio, under officers of railroad experience, then commenced taking up the track and ties on the Montgomery railroad. On the afternoon of Saturday, the 18th, the work was entirely finished. The wharf was made serviceable and strong; eight hundred yards of railroad completed, a platform car made and put on it in running order. This was all done in five and a half days. Though the work was done to provide for a future contingency, the industrious men who performed it had the pleasure of seeing it available the next day, in landing and bringing up supplies.

Pensacola at that time was indeed remarkable for its ruined and lonely condition. It appeared once to have contained five thousand inhabitants; but it did not then have a hundred. It had been raided upon by troops on both sides. Apparently the best part of the town had been swept away by fire. Amid the ruins, the shrubbery, and here and there delicate flowers, recalled a period of taste, if not of affluence. But now there was not a dozen sound buildings in the town, and not a single shop doing business.

Not knowing how long they would remain, the troops handsomely policed their camp and parade grounds, and built



quarters; using for the latter materials from the ruined buildings in town.

Nor did they neglect to devote some hours to military exercises.

Information of the movement of these troops from Barrancas (familiarily known in that neighborhood as the "Navy-yard") reached Gen. Maury in Mobile in about thirty-six hours after they had started; but their number was estimated at about four times what it actually was.<sup>1</sup> At that time the confederates

<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "*Blakely, March 12, 1 A. M.*—Despatch from Greenwood that enemy left navy-yard early yesterday morning (the 11th) in direction of Gonzalis. Cavalry, infantry and artillery, twenty thousand strong."

*Same to Same*: "*March 12, 5:12 A. M.*—The following despatch, just received by Capt. Tutt, a reliable officer, commanding at Greenwood: 'Just received a despatch from Mr. ——— confirming the movement of the enemy from the navy-yard yesterday morning. They encamped near Pensacola last night with eighteen or twenty thousand, where they were to be joined by Gen. Steele with the balance of the command. Whole force estimated at about twenty-five thousand. Think they are coming out by Gonzalis.'"

*Same to Same*: "*March 12, 5:10 P. M.*—They had seventy-nine wagons and about seven days' provisions."

*Lidell to Col. Armistead, at Pollard*: "*March 12, 5:20 A. M.*—The enemy is moving out from Pensacola. . . . Apprise me as soon as you ascertain what direction the enemy takes. Collect all your cavalry and keep in front of him."

*Lidell to Col. Armistead*: "*March 12, 6:45 P. M.*—By direction of Gen. Maury you will keep as close to the enemy as possible, and keep in constant communication with Gen. Dan. Adams at Montevallo and Gen. Taylor at Meridian." . . . .

*Lidell to Armistead*: "*March 12, 10:10 P. M.* . . . . Have you heard anything from your Pensacola road scouts? Where are your 'sub-terra' shells and your piece of artillery? Keep them with you, and, if possible, use them." . . . .

*Lidell to Armistead*: "*March 13, 9 P. M.*—Push forward your scouts at once to Pensacola; find out where the enemy is, and what he is doing."

*Same to Same*: "*March 14, 11:30 P. M.*—The main body will yet move toward Pollard, or this way. Watch him closely until he develops his intentions."

*Same to Same*: "*March 17.*—Later information states, that the enemy is increasing rather than diminishing his force. Unless your scouts go nearer the navy-yard and Pensacola, they cannot ascertain the facts."



had military posts at Canoe station and Pollard on the Montgomery and Mobile railroad, about fifty miles north of Pensacola; and there was a picket of thirty men at Pine Barren creek. On the 12th, Gen. Lidell telegraphed Col. Armistead at Canoe station that the federals had moved out from Pensacola. This was a mistake, and must have led to some uncertainty. Col. Armistead complied with the urgent appeals made to him to send scouts down to Pensacola. On the 15th, a small party of confederates appeared in front of the picket four miles out on the Pollard road, but without accomplishing anything further than obtaining a glimpse of the picket. This led to the strengthening of the cavalry picket on that road with a company of infantry so disposed as to render the capture of a small party probable if they had again appeared.

The confederates were no less vigilant and eager. Gen. Lidell had instructed his outposts with a view of capturing any federal scouts or picket that might be sent out, specially enjoining them "to be certain of capturing the whole party, so that the enemy will not know what has become of them."<sup>1</sup>

On the 19th, Gen. Steele, with Hawkins' division and Lucas' cavalry brigade, moved to Pensacola; taking the short route over the wide ford northeast of Barrancas. The cavalry brigade consisted of the Second Illinois cavalry (but then detached to act with Spurling), First Louisiana cavalry, Second New York veteran cavalry, the battalion of Thirty-first Massachusetts mounted infantry, and the Second Massachusetts light battery. Part of this brigade crossed the ford in the dark, and the Thirty-first Massachusetts lost two horses with equip-

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Capt. J. V. Tutt, commanding at Greenwood*: "March 15.—Send out a force sufficient to capture any picket-posts of the enemy, or scouting parties that they may send out. You will instruct the officer in charge (who must be a competent one) to be certain of capturing the whole party, so that the enemy will not know what has become of them; and in that way you may be able to gain some information concerning the intentions of the enemy."

ments. The same day, Lieut.-Col. Spurling, with eight hundred cavalry, went on transports to the east shore of the Blackwater, and thence moved to strike the railroad above Pollard.

On the 20th, Steele's command moved out from Pensacola on the Pollard road, with ten days' rations—five carried by the men and five in the wagons. There were about two hundred and seventy wagons in the whole column. Each division took charge of its own train. The Second division of the Thirteenth corps had the advance, and started at daylight. It was followed by the colored division. The cavalry brigade (except the Second Illinois, which embarked with Spurling) left Pensacola at three, P. M., and bivouacked at ten, P. M., four miles out, the roads having been badly cut up by the infantry. The Second division, being in the advance, moved along pleasantly, halting ten minutes every hour, and went into camp by noon, at the Twelve-mile house, in a pine forest, where the ground sloped a few hundred yards down to a clear stream. Each regiment came up in handsome style, with the music playing. Moore's brigade had been seen by confederate scouts, and the number of regiments counted, eight miles out from Pensacola.<sup>1</sup>

A few wagons of the train had sunk down to the hubs in the sand in some places, and these were not up till after dark. Hawkins' division went into camp not far from the Second, before dark. The picket on the road was posted a mile and a half out. It was in charge of Capt. Rockwell, Thirty-fourth Iowa, who had his men so arranged as to have captured any confederate scouts if they had ventured closely up. Before midnight, a

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<sup>1</sup> Capt. Lewis to Col. Garner, Chief of Staff: "*Blakely, March 21.*—Have just received following telegram *Hd. Qrs., Canoe Station, March 21. To H. L. D. Lewis, A. A. A. G.:* Scouts, just in, report five (5) regiments of enemy's infantry, with small body of cavalry, eight (8) miles this side of Pensacola, at twelve o'clock yesterday. Have sent down two regiments to meet them, if still advancing. "C. G. ARMISTEAD, Col. Comd'g."



heavy fall of rain commenced, and continued to come down in a steady pour till ten the next day. It was the same storm that impeded the column marching up the eastern shore of the bay to Fish river. The ground was, in many places, so flooded, the troops were driven from their slumber and rest before morning.

At daylight of the 21st, Spiceley's brigade, of the Second division, moved out of camp, and pursued the march. Moore's brigade remained, to take charge of the division train. As soon as it was light, the artillery and the wagons attempted to get out of park and move on. Then appeared a most discouraging and dismal prospect. The ground, seeming to be a mere crust, which the falling torrents had softened and dissolved, many of the wagons and artillery carriages had actually sunk down to the hubs in the very tracks where they had stood. The thought occurred to every one that he was indeed in the midst of the Florida swamps! In the midst of large trees, where the ground was covered with a thin grass, and with every indication of its being firm and solid, the wheels would sink down, and the mules, in their struggles to draw, would themselves plunge into the quicksand, and require assistance to get out. Then wagons would be unloaded, and, after moving a little way, and getting upon what seemed firm ground, would be reloaded. The men pushed from behind, and tugged at every wheel. In some cases ropes were hitched to the wagon-tongues, and the men laying hold, pulled the loaded wagons a considerable distance. Meantime, the pioneers were busy with their axes, cutting down small trees to corduroy the road. At first only bad places would be corduroyed. But these were constantly occurring; for, if one team passed safely, the next was liable to be stalled, if it followed in the same track. It seemed desirable to avoid corduroying the entire road, yet it would, perhaps, have been economy of



labor to have done so. During the day Moore's brigade performed much work on the road, and in getting the train along. The division marched only three miles, and camped near the Fifteen-mile house. The most of the train was up by dark.

The division commander had waited to see the artillery and teams get started, and to judge how far they could move during the day. He then, with the staff, passed on, and overtook Spiceley at eight o'clock, not far from the point where it was intended to camp. The rain was still falling. Spiceley had his brigade drawn up in line on the right of the road, in closed ranks, the men with their oilcloths (*ponchos*) on, standing at secure arms, with a cheerful expression of countenance. The fine brass bands of the Twenty-fourth Indiana and Seventy-sixth Illinois struck up inspiring music. It was like a review—a singular spectacle, but one delightful to the soldier. None but a natural soldier would have conceived the idea.

The cavalry brigade started at noon, and marched three miles only, such were the difficulties of the road, and bivouacked at dark. Steele did not move his quarters, but was active in helping along the column. A large mail having arrived, was distributed in the afternoon.

The next day, the 22d, was pleasant. Spiceley's brigade furnished large details to improve the road four miles to the front. Before noon, Hawkins' division got up near the Fifteen-mile house, and camped. Lucas' cavalry arrived late in the afternoon. About noon, Steele, with the division commanders, examined the road three miles to the front. The inspector examined the wagons, and caused some hundreds of pounds of baggage to be abandoned.

The confederates were still using every exertion to ascertain Steele's force and purpose. Their latest information estimated

his strength at thirty thousand. About the same time, they learned that Thomas was sending down forces from the north.<sup>1</sup>

The march was resumed the following morning, March 23d. The cavalry was in the advance, immediately followed by Hawkins' division. In the Second division the artillery and wagon-train began to hitch up at nine o'clock, and the division was on the march by ten. But the road was so cut up by the trains in advance, that Spiceley's brigade, having charge of the train of the Second division, had to renew its labor on the roads before it was a mile from camp, and was, in fact, busy corduroying much of the ten miles to Pine Barren creek.

A detachment of confederate cavalry under Lieut.-Col. Leary was watching Steele's advance, and occasionally from behind log breastworks on a favorable crest attempted to hold him in check. Early in the forenoon there was considerable noise of musketry, and the Thirty-first Massachusetts, Lucas' rear battalion, was called to the front in a gallop. But the obstruction was not serious; and before reaching Pine Barren creek the confederates filed off toward the north, for they knew the bridge was destroyed, and that the stream was not fordable.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Armistead*: "March 22.—Let me know what is going on in your front."

*Lidell to Maury*: "March 22, 5:15, A. M.—I received the enclosed despatches about midnight, and send them to you by first boat. Lieut. Sibley's report, in a great measure, confirms that sent yesterday from Col. Armistead from Canoe station. The enemy's strength being, however, ten thousand less [despatch had estimated Steele's force at forty thousand] in this last. You will see that Gen. Thomas co-operates from Vicksburgh *simultaneously*. I now think there can be no longer any doubt upon the subject. It is sad to think of the desolation that will follow the traces of these columns of devastating Yankees!!! I have nothing late from the force coming up by Fish river. I can only conjecture that if sufficiently large, it will attempt to get possession of Spanish fort for a base, whence occupation can be given to the fleet in the bay. In carrying through the movement on Selma, the use of the Alabama river is of the utmost importance to the enemy; hence I don't think we will be permitted to remain in quiet long."



Their loss had been one killed and one captured. At noon, Steele, being at the front, came to where the ground begins to descend to the Pine Barren. It was a mile from that stream. Just there was a farm under fair tillage, and on both sides of the road a high rail fence. Four miles off to the right could be seen the high and wooded bank of the Escambia, having a picturesque appearance. From this point of observation to the Pine Barren the descent was some three hundred feet; but there were several intervening hills, and on both sides of the road an open pine forest. Gen. Steele soon ascertained the condition of Pine Barren creek; that it was ten feet deep, its banks widely overflowed, and the current violent; also that the bridge was destroyed. Companies A and D, Capt. Bond, and Lieut. Bond of the Thirty-first Massachusetts, crossed the stream, dismounted, on driftwood, and after exchanging a few shots with the confederate picket, drove it away, and remained there themselves as a picket. One confederate was wounded. Capt. Newton, assistant-engineer on Gen. Steele's staff, soon after commenced the construction of a bridge assisted by large details from the infantry. The cavalry went into camp on the left side of the road a few hundred yards from the creek, and on high ground. Hawkins' division about opposite on the right of the road. The Second division coming up by the middle of the afternoon camped on both sides of the road in rear of the other troops. Steele's tents were pitched on the left of the road in the centre of his command. By direction, the troops repeated the evening call twice to give the confederates an exaggerated impression of their number.

The weather continued pleasant on the 24th. Lucas had scouts out to Williams' station, and some infantry of the Second division were sent down to the Escambia landing, to look for steamboats, which were expected from Barrancas with supplies. But some accident prevented their arrival. Captain Newton,



though in poor health, continued hard at work, constructing the bridge, and much of the time was in the water. He was assisted by Captain Pickering's pioneers, and other details. White and colored troops were working together. At about three o'clock in the afternoon, he said it would be finished in an hour, which was sooner than the commanding general expected. This information was immediately communicated unofficially to Gen. Lucas, who ordered "Boots and Saddles" to be sounded, then to Gen. Hawkins, and then to Gen. Steele, who at once sent out orders for the command to move that evening. The bridge was finished at the time specified; and was three hundred feet in length. Considering that the logs had to be newly cut and carried some little distance, that the current was deep and swift, that its banks were flooded bottoms, covered with timber and underbrush, difficult to move about in, a bridge of that kind to be made in one day, is a respectable achievement. Yet it was no singular instance of the soldier's enterprise and toil.

The cavalry began to cross as soon as the bridge was done. Its wagon train moved tardily. It had to descend a steep hill, terminating at the river bank, and the road being much washed the wagons could not well be held back, and were in danger of striking against trees. At that late hour, a few trees had to be chopped down, and some other work done on the road. The Second division had moved out of camp and had to sit down on the road side till the teams had got over. Spiceley's brigade was the advance of that division and the Sixty-ninth Indiana, Lieut.-Col. Perry, was down at the river bank. Next to the bridge, the road, for one hundred feet or more, was covered with water a foot deep; and the men of that battalion had taken off their shoes and stockings, and rolled up their trowsers, so as to be ready to wade to the bridge. It was nearly dark before the cavalry wagon train was over. The Second division then followed. There was but a slight rise of the ground from the

north bank, and the surface was thickly wooded with pine. The artillery and wagons of the Second division had moved but a few rods after crossing the Pine Barren, till the wheels began to sink down horridly. Moore's brigade had charge of the train, and the men had to resume the toil of corduroying. The artillery and train got a mile and a quarter from the river at about eight o'clock in the evening, and bivouacked on rather high ground, half a mile from the cavalry. The colored division did not move till morning. Lucas had pickets out about two miles to the front, and during the night their shots were frequently heard.

In course of the day, his scouts had brought in a Mr. Williams as prisoner, who imparted to Gen. Steele some information respecting the roads, and was detained by the latter till the next day. He acquired the impression that Gen. Steele was moving on Montgomery, which was not singular. Nor was it strange that a citizen should estimate his force to be twenty-five thousand. But that it should be thought he was taking *five hundred pieces of artillery through the swamps of Florida*, must indeed be considered an extraordinary estimate.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Lidell to Maury: "Blakely, March 25.*—The following despatch has just been received from Col. Armistead: '*Canoe Station, March 25. Capt. Lewis, A. A. A. G.: Since last despatch, a scout has arrived: says Bud Williams was captured by enemy yesterday, and detained all night at Gen. Steele's headquarters. From observation, and information received from enemy, Williams says his force is twenty-five thousand, with over five hundred wagons and a great many pieces of artillery, thinks five hundred. (!) Says Gen. Steele kept him all night giving information as to the roads and towns between Pollard and Montgomery. This force moving on Montgomery, negro and white troops about equally divided. Steele asked information as to all roads running parallel in direction of Montgomery and Claiborne.*'"

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CONTINUATION OF STEELE'S MARCH.

STEELE's column moved out on the morning of the 25th, at daylight, with expectations of a fight. Scouts had brought reports the evening before, that two brigades of confederates, with artillery, were intrenched on some creek a few miles ahead, and intended to make a determined resistance. The picket firing, which had been heard in the night, and other circumstances, seemed to render the report probable.

Lucas's troops encountered slight resistance when three miles out. At nine o'clock, they reached Mitchell's creek, on the opposite bank of which a cavalry force of about four hundred, under Col. Charles P. Ball, was intrenched. Some distance in Ball's rear was Clanton's brigade, as a reserve. The bridge had been partly destroyed. The banks, though not high, were skirted with a thick growth of shrubbery, which was material as a cover and defence. Having learned the nature of the force in his front, Lucas sent a detachment of the Second New York veteran cavalry, under Col. Christler, through the woods to the left, to cross the stream, if practicable, a mile above, and come in on the right flank and rear of the confederates. He then caused three companies of the First Louisiana cavalry to dismount and cross the stream below. They attacked Ball's left with great spirit, and, after a short contest, made him abandon his position. This firing was plainly heard by the federal infantry. The Second division followed the cavalry. And at about ten, A. M., an orderly brought word from Gen.



Lucas, that he had met the enemy and captured three or four of them.

Col. Christler returned, not having found a crossing. After causing the bridge to be repaired, so the horses could pass over safely, Lucas moved forward at a trot, with the First Louisiana and a portion of the Second New York. He met the confederate forces at Cotton creek, and again at Canoe creek, but at each place his men pressed on with so much vigor and gallantry that they were not long held in check. At Cotton creek the Second Massachusetts light battery opened fire, and for a few moments the combat seemed severe. The confederates lost a few men in that skirmish. On the north bank of Canoe creek the ground rose to a height of two hundred feet, and afforded an advantageous position to the confederates, if it had been advisable to make a firm stand. From there they fell back to Pringle's creek, distant about four miles.

#### COMBAT OF PRINGLE'S CREEK.

Pringle's creek was a shallow stream, skirted with shrubbery. Its north bank rose gradually fifty feet, and was covered with a characteristic growth of pine. On the brow of that crest was a high fence of split rails, and a few hard-wood trees with heavy foliage. After crossing the ford, the road bore round to the right, making a gradual ascent of the hill, and was much obscured by the trees. Three hundred yards above the ford was Pritchard's small grist-mill, and above that a few acres were covered with a mill-pond. A mile below there was the small village of Bluff Spring.

Arriving at this creek, Col. Ball, to save his command, turned off rapidly toward Williams' station, leaving a picket on the road. He did not suppose Clanton's brigade would again offer battle, and both he and Col. Armistead, who was with him, deemed Pringle's creek a poor position. This left only

Clanton's brigade in the immediate front of Lucas. The brigade consisted of two Alabama cavalry regiments, or battalions, under command of Col. Leary and Maj. Faulkner, not exceeding five hundred men; and attached to it also were two pieces of artillery, and one hundred infantry reserves, which remained on the north bank of the Escambia. Gen. Clanton had not yet arrived from Pollard, and his brigade was under command of Col. Leary. The latter made a breastwork of fence-rails on the rise north of Pringle's creek, and behind it again formed his men. Immediately in their rear was an extensive field, wooded on both sides; and half a mile back of them their horses were tied, in a thick grove of hard wood, near some old log buildings which had been used for soldiers' quarters.

A sharp engagement ensued as soon as Lucas' advance came up. The confederates were driven back two hundred yards in ten minutes, and were still falling back as Gen. Clanton galloped up and ordered a halt. At this Col. Leary seemed surprised, and told Clanton they were being flanked. Clanton replied: "But we must fall back in order." The latter then commanded his forces to dress up on the colors. His brave color-bearer, young Maynor, held the colors high, and repeated the command, "Dress up on the colors." Fifteen minutes afterward Clanton fell severely, and it was then thought mortally, wounded. Immediately the buglers of the First Louisiana sounded the call for the charge, and that regiment mounted and led by its commander, Lieut.-Col. A. S. Badger, dashed forward in line of battle, in a gallant, impetuous manner, and with a wild and thrilling cheer. They were met by a volley; and though some of their number fell, the fury of the charge was not checked; and in a few moments they had swept over and captured the main part of the confederate force. The prisoners consisted of Gen. Clanton, ten other officers, and one hundred and twenty enlisted men. The killed and wounded



numbered about a dozen. A battle-flag was captured by Private Thomas Riley. A number of horses and mules were also captured. The loss of the First Louisiana was two killed—First Lieut. Albert Schaffer and a bugler who fell in the charge—and eight wounded. Maj. J. E. Cowan of that regiment received a severe and painful injury to his leg by coming in contact with a horse. In this action the Second New York attacked the confederates on their flank. The remainder of Clanton's command, a few who were mounted, were pursued to the Escambia, where, not knowing that the bridge was torn up from the centre, they leaped into the swollen and powerful stream, and escaped to the opposite shore or were drowned. The others fled into the swamps. Lucas had a running fight all the way to the Escambia. The two pieces of artillery and reserves from the north bank of that river produced an effect greater than their force justified; such is the moral power of artillery. They were replied to by four pieces of the Second Massachusetts, under Lieut. Greenleaf, and in an hour compelled to retire.

The Second division headquarters, with Spiceley's brigade of that division, at one o'clock, had ascended the long hill north of Canoe creek and gone into camp. Just then a despatch from Col. Whittelsey, chief of staff to Gen. Steele, was received stating that it would be prudent to send forward a brigade and some artillery to support Lucas.

The commander of the division then with Spiceley's brigade and a section of each of the light batteries hastened forward. Just beyond Pringle's creek the prisoners were received and taken charge of by the provost guard of the Second division. The detachment arrived at the Escambia at four in the afternoon, and only a short time after the cavalry, having marched seventeen miles. The banks of the Escambia being greatly overflowed, and it being essential to cross it, details from Spiceley's brigade set to work constructing a foot bridge on the



railroad trestle which crossed the river a few rods below the destroyed bridge. But before the infantry had arrived Lucas had sent over two companies of the Thirty-first Massachusetts, dismounted, as pickets.

The road had required considerable labor in order to bring the train along, and the remainder of the infantry that day got only to Cotton creek. Near the Escambia the road crossed marshes several hundred yards in extent, and much of the way covered with ponds of water. Through these it was perilous to ride and tedious to march afoot. The details that worked on the bridge had to pass through such places. It was with much difficulty that the artillery was got through.

Information of the fight at Pringle's creek and its result was received at Mobile the same day.<sup>1</sup>

*Entry of Pollard.*—In pursuance of Gen. Steele's orders, Spiceley's brigade of the Second division, marched for Pollard at daylight, the 26th. It was also accompanied by the division commander and staff. Infantry were sent, because cavalry could not yet cross the river. All went a-foot; and having crossed over on the railroad trestle in single file, descended as best they could, some fifteen feet upon the marshy and overflowed bank. Thence, for some distance, the way lay through swampy places, which had to be waded. The little Escambia was bridged in a short time. On its opposite bank some confederate scouts were seen, and two or three shots were fired. The road showed tracks of the artillery, which the confederates had used the day before, and the federals not yet having any certain knowledge of what was in Pollard, thought

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<sup>1</sup> *Gen. Lidell to Col. Spence*: "March 25.—Gen. Clanton was wounded, and with Col. Lary, Major Wharton, and the greater part of the brigade, were captured to-day near Bluff Springs. Col. Armistead and Col. Ball, not with them in the fight, still safe and in front of the enemy. That column of the enemy have a large wagon train and are moving for Montgomery."

it possible they might there meet with resistance. Preparations were accordingly made for such an emergency. But no armed confederates could be found, and the village was peaceably taken possession of. It was a small village, having, perhaps, twenty dwellings, rude and much scattered. There were two or three wooden storehouses, used by the confederates, but there was no property, save a barrel or two of hard-bread. The public storehouses, and only those, were burned.

A thousand yards of railroad was torn up by the Twenty-fourth Indiana, for the moral effect, but the bridges were not harmed, for it was thought they would soon be useful to the federals.

Spiceley's brigade, it will be remembered, consisted of two Indiana regiments—the Twenty-fourth and Sixty-ninth—and two Illinois regiments—the Sixty-seventh and Seventy-sixth—and it was in fine condition. It had two remarkably good brass bands; and when the brigade marched away from the village, these bands struck up their inspiring strains. It appeared as if the whole population of the village, consisting principally of women and children, were following the soldiers away. They walked along by their side, talking with them with the utmost good humor.

As the brigade was leaving the place, some of the cavalry foragers entered, they having effected a crossing of the Escambia some distance above the railroad bridge.

The infantry returned to their camp, south of the Escambia, at four in the afternoon. The Eighty-third Ohio had come up and crossed the Escambia, to be in readiness as a reserve.

*Spurling's Operations.*—On the morning of the 19th, Lieut.-Col. A. B. Spurling, Second Maine cavalry, began to move from Barrancas on transports, with a force of eight hundred mounted men, with instructions to cut the railroad above Pollard. He had an experienced and excellent command, consisting of the



mounted force of the three following regiments: the Second Maine, Major C. A. Miller; the Second Illinois, Major Frank Moore; the First Florida, Capt. Francis Lyons. Two companies under Capt. E. D. Johnson, Second Maine cavalry, were landed at Milton, and moved out toward Pollard, to drive away any confederate scouts that might be there, and to create the impression that the whole force would land there. By three, A. M., of the 20th, Spurling had landed his force on the east shore of the Blackwater, three miles below, and opposite Milton, and marched for the railroad, *via* Andalusia. Confederate scouts were frequently met, and few escaped capture. The night of the 23d, from eleven to one o'clock, the column halted to rest, a few miles out from Evergreen.

*Capture of a Staff Officer.*—Soon after the column halted, Col. Spurling rode forward to his advance, and had scarcely arrived there when he heard talking in front. Dismounting quickly, he cautioned the men to be on the alert. He then stepped forward a few paces, and satisfied himself there were men approaching. Then he crouched down beside the fence, to let them pass. There were three; and as soon as they had got by, Spurling jumped in their rear and commanded them to surrender. They demanded to know who he was. Spurling replied, "I am a live Yankee." At that, the confederates raised their rifles on him, and Spurling as quickly commenced firing on them with a revolver, wounding two and capturing the three. They proved to be Lieut. Watts, of Gen. Clanton's staff, and two scouts. By this, Spurling prevented alarm being given of his approach, and at three o'clock on the morning of the 24th he cut the railroad seven miles above Evergreen, and captured an up and a down train of cars, one train being loaded with confederate troops, whom he took prisoners. Having destroyed considerable railroad track and rolling stock, he came down, *via* Sparta, bringing his prisoners mounted on captured horses. At Sparta,



he burned six more cars, and the depôt containing public stores, which had been sent from Pollard for safe keeping. The morning of the 26th, attempting to cross the bridge over Murder creek, it was found to be partly destroyed, and a small confederate force was posted on the opposite side, behind a strong barricade of logs; but it was dislodged and driven off by a detachment of the Second Illinois and Second Maine dismounted. Lieut. Vose and one man of the Second Maine cavalry were wounded. The bridge was then repaired and crossed. Col. Spurling's command arrived at Pollard on the 26th, only a short time after Spiceley's brigade had left, and joined Steele's column the morning of the 27th, he having accomplished the object of his expedition in a brilliant manner, and without the loss of a man.

*Steele turns toward Blakely.*—The evening of the 26th, Steele called his division commanders together, and notified them the column would turn the next morning to join Canby. There were now but four days' rations on hand, and the country was remarkably destitute. It was but little else than a wilderness. The men were therefore put on half-rations. They having been exposed to wet weather and heavy fatigue the five days' rations they carried had not lasted the full time, as to all the men. But there were some who had been saving, and were still fairly provided. A large number were without anything, and were expecting a new issue when they received orders to go on half-rations.

Early on the morning of the 27th, the column turned and marched westerly, toward Canoe station, on the Mobile and Montgomery railroad. Unfortunately, the route had not been previously examined and repaired. The cavalry moved out first, followed by Hawkins' division; but in attempting to get the wagons along, it was found, that the first two miles of the road needed to be corduroyed. This prevented the rear of the Second division from starting till noon. The prisoners being

in charge of that division, those of them who were wounded were carried carefully on stretchers to the neighboring houses. Gen. Clanton was thus carried, for a ball had passed quite through his body, and he was supposed to be mortally wounded. But he recovered.

Spurling's prisoners, upward of a hundred, were turned over to Capt. Garretson, provost marshal of the Second division. Spurling's men had supplied themselves plentifully with tobacco, which they distributed generously among the other troops.

The confederates appear to have restored their telegraph communication on the Montgomery road in four days after it was cut.

Col. Hall, after leaving Pringle's creek, passed round thirty miles up to Hollins' bridge, and the next night (Sunday, the 26th) swam the Escambia, then proceeded to Bellville, and thence to Evergreen. Col. Armistead remained at Bellville, and from there, on the 30th, telegraphed Gen. Lidell of the occupation of Pollard by the federals on the 26th, and Canoe station the 27th.<sup>1</sup>

The distance to Canoe station, on the route the column moved, was thirteen miles. After passing the bad road near the Escambia, the country was hilly, and it seemed that there would be but slight trouble in getting the wagons along. But the rain commenced falling soon after noon, dissolving the earth's treacherous surface. The main part of the column reached Canoe station in good season. But Spiceley's brigade with the train of the Second division had to bivouac near Miles', four miles from Canoe station. The artillery got a little farther. The night was intensely dark, the rain was coming down in torrents. The prospect was dismal.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "March 31.—Col. Armistead telegraphs from Bellville via Greenville, 30th, that the enemy were in force at Pollard Sunday morning, and reported to have occupied Canoe station Monday. He heard the enemy would turn toward Tensas and Blakely."



The 28th, the weather was pleasant overhead. The Second division worked from daylight till eleven, A. M., and corduroyed the road nearly the whole way from Miles' to Canoe station—four miles—in order to get up the train and artillery. The cavalry and Hawkins' division had moved on. The Second division train was all up to Canoe station by one o'clock. A rest was then taken of two hours. Rations were then issued for five thousand one hundred and seventy-nine men, the number of enlisted men of the two brigades present, and for two hundred and thirty-six prisoners. At three, P. M., the march was resumed in a northwesterly direction. The troops moved out in good spirits and handsome style, the music playing. Five miles were made by dusk, when they again went into camp on an abandoned plantation. Gen. Steele with the rest of the column camped about five miles beyond.

The march was resumed at daylight, the 29th, by the Second division; but the roads were bad, and had to be corduroyed much of the way. The camp of Hawkins' division was passed at eleven o'clock. From there to the Perdido was three miles, and, heavy rain falling in the afternoon, that distance also had to be corduroyed. At dusk the column camped near the Perdido. The cavalry moved on to Weatherford's plantation.

For the past three days cannonading had been heard in the direction of Spanish fort; and there was a rumor that the federals had assaulted and been repulsed—badly repulsed, of course, for the rumors of the camp are seldom moderate.

Gen. Steele having sent some scouts with despatches to Gen. Canby, they were observed by the confederates at Bay Minette station.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Holtzclaw, "commanding advance:" "March 29. . . . . Capt. Winston has just reported the advance of the enemy, consisting of between fifty and one hundred cavalry, was at Bay Minette station this afternoon, at three o'clock."*



The morning of the 30th was raw and windy, and the soldiers were seen in thick circles around the camp-fires. The colored division moved out first, and was followed by the Second at nine o'clock. The Perdido, where forded, was two feet deep, and some trees were felled, on which the soldiers crossed. To get the artillery along, the Second division made two miles more of corduroy, and made it promptly. Considerable work had to be done also on the road near McGills. Then the division marched two miles farther, making nine from the Perdido, and, at dusk, went into camp in the woods, on high ground, just beyond a clear stream. The cavalry and Hawkins' division had got a few miles beyond. Toward evening, the foragers, who had been to Montgomery Hill, brought in some beef cattle and sheep, which were greatly needed. The troops were on third rations, and the majority were suffering with hunger. The labor and exposure were enough to reduce men who were well fed. As it was, the effects of the hardships of the march, and the scanty fare, could be discerned, day by day, in the reduced flesh of the soldiers. There was, perhaps, a day's ration still in the train. It was singular to perceive so much difference in the economy and husbandry of men. While some would be living on parched corn, a few would have haversacks still plump, and well furnished with bacon and hard bread, coffee and sugar.<sup>1</sup>

At daylight on the 31st, the Second division resumed the march, making Stockton, nineteen miles, by two o'clock. The whole column arrived there about that time. For a few miles before reaching Stockton the country was more settled and

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<sup>1</sup> "Tired, wet, muddy, and hungry. Our supper consisted to-night of sassafras tea and parched corn, which we had picked up from the ground where our cavalry had fed."—*Diary of a Private Soldier, March 30.*

"Rations very scarce, and forage also. The prisoners are very hungry, but say we are doing the best we can with them."—*Diary of another Enlisted Man, March 31.*

fertile; and though hilly, the road was fair. It was indeed a luxury to come out upon a road that did not need corduroying. The ration question began there to assume a pleasanter shape.<sup>1</sup> There was plenty of fresh meat. Considerable corn was also found, and a grist-mill there was kept running while the troops remained.

The troops having supplied themselves with corn from the neighboring plantations, the march was resumed the forenoon of April 1. The Second division was in the rear, and its last files left Stockton at noon. The road being hard, though hilly, Steele with the cavalry and Hawkins division pushed on to within two miles of Blakely. A regiment of Pile's brigade was detached to guard the Hollyoak bridge, but returned the next day.

*Capture of an Outpost.*—Lieut.-Col. Spurling still retaining his command, was sent forward from Stockton in advance to open communication with Gen. Canby. Arriving within six miles of Blakely he encountered confederate scouts, several of whom he captured, and pursued the remainder closely two miles, when he came upon a stronger force, consisting of the Forty-ninth Mississippi, near Wilkins' plantation, posted behind a barricade of fence-rails three tier deep. Spurling then caused the Second Maine to dismount to attack on foot, leaving the First Florida as a reserve and as a guard for the horses. He then disposed the Second Illinois with sabres drawn in rear of the Second Maine, who were already skirmishing briskly, and steadily advancing. The confederates observed the bullets of the Second Maine to rattle faster and harder on their rail barricade, and discerning the glittering sabres of the Second Illinois farther back they soon gave way. Then Spurling ordered

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<sup>1</sup> "Marched nineteen miles to-day. Have no bread or coffee, but plenty of pork, beef, and mutton. Drew one cracker a piece to-night."—*Diary of a Private Soldier, March 31.*



the Second Illinois to charge, which it did in gallant style, and captured the main part of the outpost before it could rally behind its second line of works. The Second Maine followed as soon as it could mount. About one hundred of the Forty-ninth Mississippi were captured, with its colors and arms. Spurling's loss was one killed and three wounded.

About the same time the confederate outpost at O. Sibley's was withdrawn and the bridge set on fire.<sup>1</sup> Lucas, having learned the locality of the bridge, by permission, sent the Second Illinois cavalry, under Lieut.-Col. Moore, to hold it, and the latter arrived in season to save it. Lucas' cavalry also reconnoitered the position of Blakely and drew the fire of its artillery. One of the cavalry-men was killed within a thousand yards of the principal redoubt on the Stockton road; and was afterward buried by men of the Second division. The cavalry also charged on an outpost on Saluda hill, and the confederates having rallied a skirmish ensued in which there were one or two killed and wounded on both sides. During the day the cavalry lost a few men and horses by the explosion of torpedoes.

Here, then, before Blakely, moving with rapid and defiant step, was the column which, a few days before, was supposed to be inextricably stuck in the Florida swamps. It is not

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<sup>1</sup> *Capt. Lewis to the colonel commanding infantry at Sibley's house: "March 31.—The enemy is about fifteen miles distant near the railroad above us, and will probably advance to-morrow morning; in view of which Gen. Lidell directs that you withdraw your advance pickets to-night from front of the enemy to Sibley's creek where you now are. You will direct the officer in charge of the squad with sub-terra shells to plant them at once, except in the road, where they will not be placed until the last moment, leaving a 'vidette' in the road, to inform any of our men coming in of the necessity of keeping in the middle of the road. It is necessary for you to concentrate your command in order to be ready to move to the works—with the artillery—or resist the enemy where you are should he come in your front and not from above. You will also burn the Sibley bridge should he be able to drive you from the creek."*



strange that the commanding general at Blakely apprehended an assault.<sup>1</sup>

From Stockton to the railroad, crossing at Hall's, the distance is fourteen miles. The Second division reached that place just before dark, and received orders, which had been left by Gen. Steele, to destroy the railroad. Spiceley's brigade having got in first, the Twenty-fourth Indiana was set to that duty, and effectively destroyed four hundred yards of track in an hour.

*Veatch's Movement with Supplies.*—On the 31st of March, Gen. Canby started a train of seventy-five wagons of supplies to Steele. The train was in charge of Veatch's division, which moved out from near Spanish fort at eight in the morning, arriving at Hollyoak at noon, where it intrenched. The next day, April 1, a detachment of one hundred of the Fourth Tennessee cavalry, under Lieut.-Col. Thornbury, reported to Veatch, and Maj. McEntee, Steele's chief quartermaster, also came up from Canby's headquarters. Veatch marched again at three, P. M. At six, P. M., he heard firing toward Blakely. The column halted, and a squadron of cavalry, supported by two regiments of infantry and a section of artillery, marched three miles farther toward Blakely, when, everything becoming quiet, and it being very dark, they returned to the division-camp. The supplies were got to Steele the next night.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "April 1.—In view of the fact that Steele with his negroes may assault our works please send me one hundred and fifty small arms to place in the hands of all surplus artillerists."

## CHAPTER XV.

### INVESTMENT AND SIEGE OF BLAKELY.

BLAKELY is situated ten miles northeast from Mobile, on the east bank of the Appalachee river, and opposite its confluence with the Tensas. The extent and depth of its adjacent waters make it a fine natural port. On the old maps it appears as a place of importance, and forty years ago it had a population of three thousand; but the landowners held their property at such high prices its growth was checked, and the people soon took down their buildings and moved with them to Mobile. At the time of the war, Blakely, although a county-seat, had a population not exceeding a hundred. Its front of dry ground, on the river, is a mile and a half in extent, and this character of soil widens on going from the river; but on each side of it is low, swampy ground, densely covered with hard-wood timber and a rank growth of weeds and vines. The soil is sandy. Near the river are several large and ancient live-oaks bountifully festooned with moss. Approaching the place from the river, it seems nearly covered with a growth of natural forest, yet some old and cultivated openings can be seen. Five hundred yards above the landing is a brick-yard, and near that a spur of ground fifty feet higher than the water approaches to the river, upon which a small stockade fort was first built. Then some half a mile from that, on a plateau of equal elevation, was an incomplete bastion-fort, of red earth. Two hundred yards from the landing, almost secluded by the drooping branches of live-oaks, is the courthouse—a small two-story brick building, painted white, and

having in its basement a room answering the purpose of a jail. In sight, also, are four or five old wooden buildings. From the vicinity of the landing two principal roads diverge, one bearing northeast to Stockton, the other southeast to Pensacola. For a mile they run about parallel. They are both gravelly roads, much worn and washed. Pursuing the Stockton road, it was one mile from the landing to the line of confederate fortifications.

The Pensacola road winds around on high ground. On this road were the ruins of some cottages and a variety of shrubbery and evergreens.

For a mile back from the landing the ground has a general rise till it reaches the line of breastworks, where it is about sixty feet above the water level. The surface is uneven, and there are many dells thickly wooded with magnolias, beeches, pines, and other trees, and abounding with clear springs and streams. These are its attractive features.

The fortifications were constructed in a sort of semicircle around Blakely; resting on a bluff close to the river, at the extreme left, and terminating with the high ground, a few rods from the river, on the right. The line was nearly three miles in length, and included nine well-built redoubts—or lunettes. The fortifications were thoroughly built, and were armed with about forty pieces of artillery. But the ditches were not more than four or five feet deep. From six to eight hundred yards all along the front the trees had been felled—pines on the high ground and hard-wood trees in the ravines. Fifty yards out from the works was a line of abatis, and opposite some of the redoubts was an interior line. Then three hundred yards out to the front, parallel with the works, was another line of abatis, and behind the latter were detached rifle-pits.

*The garrison of Blakely* consisted of French's division—then commanded by Gen. Cockrell—as the left wing, its right extend-



ing a little below the redoubt south of the Stockton road. The troops of that division were veterans, mostly from Missouri and Mississippi. The right wing consisted of Gen. Thomas' division of Alabama reserves. There were several artillery companies to man the guns. The whole garrison numbered about three thousand five hundred, and was under the command of Gen. St. John Lidell.

On the 1st of April, Lidell instructed Cockrell to make a dash on Steele, if he deemed it advisable, and cautioned him, if he did so, to use "a small but reliable force." Cockrell was also directed to fill the skirmish pits on the entire line with men from his division, for the reason, as it appears, they were considered more experienced and reliable than the reserves. But, after consultation with Cockrell, this plan was abandoned, and Thomas was instructed to supply the advance pits in his front with his own men.

#### INVESTMENT OF BLAKELY.

The bivouac of the colored division was in plain hearing of the guns at Spanish fort, but to the most of those men the sound of artillery was not new. The men had lain down, each with his gun beside him, the night of the 1st, in a sober mood, and rose the next morning in similar spirits, for they were yet on slender rations of parched corn. Heavy firing on the picket line brought them into line of battle early on Sunday morning, the 2d. But before they had moved out, the quartermaster's wagons went round with corn, and two ears and a "nubbin" were dealt out to each man as rations, producing much merriment.

Drew's brigade was in the advance, and the picket from the Sixty-eighth regiment, under Lieut. Taisey, was down on the Stockton road. When morning broke, the lieutenant could see nothing of confederates in his front, and, after consulting the

officer of the cavalry detachment with him, they concluded to venture out for a reconnoissance. They proceeded without interruption for some distance, and began to think they would find the way unimpeded into Blakely, when suddenly, from a clump of trees near the edge of the slashings, they were met with a handsome volley. The firing soon grew brisk, and the confederate artillery caused them to fall back.

Then Hawkins moved his division out to close in on Blakely, marching obliquely to the right from the Stockton road, through a pine forest, with skirmishers deployed. The troops felt that they would encounter a veteran foe in his intrenchments, but that reflection neither lessened the firmness of their step, nor the ardor of their resolution. Not a man lagged, but with eager strides to the front, they kept the horses of the mounted officers on the trot. In the midst of shot, shell, and bullets, they had to cross an abrupt, deep, broken ravine, made doubly difficult, by a dense tangle of undergrowth. The regimental commanders feared that they would come out of it a confused throng. The company officers emerged, took their respective distances, still moving forward, and the line quickly filled up, and swept along as eagerly and collectedly as if no obstruction had been met.

The first earnest resistance encountered was about a mile and a quarter in front of the confederate left, at a stream which runs northwest, through a deep and narrow ravine, and near where it debouches into a wooded swamp. The skirmish line then consisted of six companies from each of the three brigades. Col. J. B. Jones of the Sixty-eighth regiment, was put in charge of it, and the main line halted. A severely-contested skirmish combat then took place on ground which became the extreme right of the Federal line of investment. The confederates hung along the brow and slopes of the bluff bordering on the swamp, and Col. Jones found it no easy matter to dislodge them. They were using their artillery vigorously from the redoubts, and a



number of the colored division had fallen. Three more companies from each brigade were sent to reinforce the skirmish line so that it finally comprised twenty-seven companies. In course of three hours the confederates were driven back about eight hundred yards. Col. Jones established his line in the slashings within one hundred and twenty yards of the confederates' outer rifle-pits; and it remained as the skirmish line on the right during the siege. Hawkins' loss was about forty killed and wounded. Among the mortally wounded was Lieut. Edward E. Talbot, a gallant young officer belonging to the Sixty-eighth. In the Forty-eighth, four were killed and four wounded, including in the latter, Col. Crandall, struck by a shell. The major of the Ninety-seventh was shot in the foot. Col. Jones was conspicuous along the line for bravery and had two horses shot under him.

At half-past eight o'clock, Lidell telegraphed to Maury at Mobile, that he thought the Federals were preparing for an assault, and that skirmishing was then occurring. He also asked for additional artillery.<sup>1</sup>

The Second division marched from Hall's soon after daylight, and were some distance on the road before sunrise. As the soldiers ascended the high ground and looked off to the left, over the wooded dells, they could see through the hazy atmosphere that the eastern sky was still crimson. It was not long before firing was heard at the front. This hastened their pace, and they arrived before Blakely at ten o'clock.

Steele, Hawkins, Lucas, and several other officers, were sitting upon logs, by the Stockton road where it is crossed by

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<sup>1</sup> *Gen. Lidell to Gen. Maury*: "*Blakely, April 2, 8:30 A. M.*—"The enemy camped apparently in large force, one mile above us, last night, on the Stockton road, and is now engaged skirmishing on the left flank, preparing, I think, for an assault or demonstration in force. I need additional artillery, temporarily, if it can be spared."



the road from Sibley's, and about a mile from the Blakely breastworks; and were discussing the information that had been brought from the front. The firing in Hawkins' front had abated somewhat, yet still continued.

It had been Steele's intention to first strike Hollyoak, and wait orders. But the want of forage compelled him to go by the way of Stockton, which brought him close to Blakely. He therefore immediately wrote Canby what had already been accomplished before Blakely; and he was soon afterward instructed to continue the investment.

Hawkins' left then extended within two hundred yards of the Stockton road, but he had a strong picket in the bushes close to the road. The Second division was ordered to form on the left of Hawkins' division. It had been formed in the following order: The Third (Moore's) brigade in line of battle, it being in the advance; and the Second (Spiceley's) in the rear, in the shade—for the rays of the sun were beating down oppressively—in column of division closed in mass. The Second Connecticut light battery was in position on the left of the Stockton road, and the Fifteenth Massachusetts on the right. All the men in the division were resting. Then before advancing any of the troops the commanding officer of the division, with some other officers, went to the front to reconnoitre. They bore off to the left of the Stockton road in the woods, and got within eight hundred yards of the main confederate works, and where they could well survey the position. It was also seen that confederate sharpshooters were numerous stationed in advanced rifle-pits. The party got within two hundred yards of some of these, but by cover of the trees, and quick dodging, they escaped being hit. Returning to the line, the One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio, under Col. Kelly, and the Twentieth Iowa, under Lieut.-Col. Leake, were advanced as skirmishers, and moved up on a line with the division

on the right. The ground they passed over sloped a little toward Blakely. It was covered with a thin and small growth of pines where the One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio passed, but where the Twentieth Iowa passed the timber was heavier. The movement could not be entirely concealed; and the confederates opened a warm fire of artillery, but it occasioned no loss to either regiment. The skirmishers of that regiment became engaged, and compelled the advanced line of confederates to take shelter in their regular line of rifle-pits.

About noon, Maj.-Gen. Osterhaus, chief of staff to Gen. Canby, came up from Spanish fort, to take a view of the position.

Later in the day, the Second division was directed to complete the line of investment to Bay Minette, a distance of two miles. Moore's brigade then took position on the left. The Twentieth Iowa and One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio were withdrawn at five, p. m., and the line occupied by the Twenty-fourth Indiana, Lieut.-Col. Sears, in front of Spiceley's brigade, and the Thirty-fourth Iowa, Col. G. W. Clark, in front of Moore's brigade. These were large regiments—the Thirty-fourth numbering seven hundred and forty-seven effective, and the Twenty-fourth numbering seven hundred and twenty-nine effective. Their deployed line, during the night, occupied about two miles. While the Thirty-fourth Iowa was taking position, one of its men—Josiah Robinson—was severely wounded in the face by a musket-ball, which shattered both of his jaws and tore out nearly all of his teeth. During the evening, John Hudson, of the Twenty-fourth Indiana, was killed.

The confederate commander observing troops moving south of the Stockton road, and even below the Pensacola road, was still more apprehensive of an assault.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "April 2.—I believe the enemy are preparing to assault my line to-day. Please spare me some light artillery temporarily, and, if possible, send it over immediately."



The same afternoon the ground was further reconnoitred by officers of the Second division, and also by Gen. Comstock, chief engineer on the staff of Gen. Canby, who had come up from Spanish fort for that purpose.

That night both divisions commenced intrenching one thousand yards from the confederate works, but the spades were few for so long a line, and the progress was slow. At ten o'clock, the commanding officer of the Second division and Col. Spiceley were both on the skirmish line of the latter's brigade, and moved the skirmishers farther to the front, and pointed out where the pits should be dug. The musketry-firing seemed to be at close range. It was quite dark. There was a vehement fire of artillery, searching the Stockton road and the ravine running parallel with, and a short distance south, of it. The frequent explosions of shells, like the flashes of lightning in a severe storm, tended to blind and bewilder one, if they did nothing worse. The confederate artillerists had been specially instructed to maintain such a fire as would compel the federals to commence their intrenchments a considerable distance off. Their gunboats, on their left, also threw shells of large calibre.

At eleven o'clock, the commanding officer of the Second division, with some of the staff and the Pioneer corps, the latter having spades, started to find the advanced line of the Third brigade, expecting to strike some part of the main line of that brigade on the way. The party crossed the brook, which runs over the Stockton road near the confederate works, at a point three quarters of a mile from those works, and near where the Second division headquarters afterward were fixed. They then passed down on the left of that brook, confident of at least striking the rear of the Third brigade skirmish line; but having gone fully as far to the front as they expected that line was, they halted. An aide then walked forward a few rods in the darkness, but was fired on sharply with musketry, the balls coming in the



direction of the party, and from only a very short distance off. It seemed then that the fire must be from the confederates, and no explanation was sought for in that position; but the party withdrew and made a new start, succeeding better the second time, yet finding the Third brigade farther to the left than was expected. The aide contended that the firing was from the skirmishers of the Third brigade, and that the party had got upon their flank. It may have been so, and undoubtedly the result would have been different but for the darkness, the roughness of the ground, and the thickness of the shrubbery with which it was covered. The occurrence is mentioned to show the difficulties of operations in the night on strange ground; how surprises and accidents will obstruct the best intentions, and how important it is that orders shall be specific, and lines kept well closed.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—SEVENTH AND EIGHTH DAYS.

*April 2.*—Sunday morning opened clear and mild, yet gave no pause to the roar of artillery and the screeching of shells. Before the sun rose, some shots were distinguished in the direction of Blakely, which very soon increased to a full volume of continued musketry and booming of field guns.

The usual Sunday morning inspection was observed at eight o'clock by those of the besiegers not on duty; the drum-beat all along the line, gave the signals; and afterward were heard the cheering strains of the brass bands. When the garrison artillerists could do so, they were disposed to blend with this agreeable music the explosion of a shell.

The two left sections of Mack's Eighteenth New York battery—four twenty-pounder rifles—opened in the morning, in Granger's front, four hundred and fifty yards from McDermett. Capt. Mack noticed that it was the eighth Sunday his battery had been in action. The sections were under the immediate command of Lieuts. Williams and McConnel. The firing was exceedingly lively and accurate; and was ably answered by the guns under Captain Barnes. Solid shot and shells literally hailed around Mack's battery, and many of his command escaped narrowly. But they all stood up to their work without the quiver of a lip. About eleven, Slocum's Washington artillery came to the assistance of Fort McDermett, for the latter was receiving some heavy blows also from the First Indiana eight-inch mortars, and the Massachusetts light guns on Mack's

left and rear. The Washington artillery almost enfiladed Mack's position, and hurled their hideous projectiles at him from eleven o'clock till one in the afternoon. Having no guns to bear on them—they being too far to his right he could only increase the intensity of his fire on the guns in his immediate front. He dismounted their twenty-four-pounder howitzer, and before noon their guns were all silent. But at four, P. M., they opened on him again, save the twenty-four-pounder. He returned the fire. The Washington artillery again set on him, and the combat continued till dark. His works had been struck thirty-eight times, during the day; but none of his command were killed or wounded. Most of the ensuing night was spent by his men, repairing the injury to his works.<sup>1</sup>

Fort McDermett had suffered the most. Its parapet had been defaced, and an VIII-inch mortar shell from Lieut. Raper's section of the First Indiana, had dropped on the carriage of its Brooks' rifle, and completely disabled it.

On the extreme right of the Sixteenth corps, Capt. S. F. Craig's battery, A, Sixth Michigan heavy artillery, had four X-inch mortars in position, behind a ridge two hundred yards from the garrison works; from which he had a fair enfilading range.

Farther to the right Wimmer's and Cox's thirty-pounders, and the other guns commanding Huger and Tracy maintained a steady fire.

Blankenship's four VIII-inch mortars of the First Indiana, began to fire at six o'clock in the morning, threw one hundred shells at Red fort, and then, his ammunition being a little short, he ceased till night.

In Granger's front batteries, No. 2 and No. 5, for heavy guns,

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<sup>1</sup> "The night after this the confederate sharpshooters called out to those in Mack's front, and inquired what battery it was, and on being informed, replied humorously, that they wished it might be taken away.



were finished, and No. 6 commenced. In the evening, the Eighty-first Illinois, Lieut.-Col. Rogers, was relieved from duty at Minette bayou, and took position on Carr's extreme right, and extended rifle-pits toward the bay, on a line with the advance works of the rest of its brigade, now less than two hundred yards from the garrison breastworks.

In the Third division, Sixteenth corps, the casualties were only eight killed and wounded, including Capt. C. G. Stetson, of the Thirty-third Wisconsin, who was instantly killed by a confederate sharpshooter, while superintending the construction of the advance line of works. In the First division, Sixteenth corps, the casualties were only four.

*The Navy.*—The Octorara had, on the 31st, taken her two IX-inch guns aboard, but in the afternoon grounded on the west bank of the channel. About noon of the 2d, she opened fire on the confederate transport Jeff. Davis, then standing down the river for the landing at Spanish fort, and succeeded in striking her once, when she turned and steamed up the river, out of range. After this, transports did not venture to Spanish fort in the daytime.

*The Eighth Day—April 3.*—*The Navy.*—The service devolving on the squadron was equally difficult and dangerous. Three vessels had now been destroyed, and a number of lives lost, in consequence of the thickly-strewn torpedoes. To remove these hidden perils, and open a passage for the squadron up the channel, details of officers and seamen kept steadily and fearlessly at work. In these duties the Metacomet, Commander Pierce Crosby, appears to have taken the lead.

The process of sweeping for torpedoes was performed in boats, by pairs, each one taking the end of a line, to the centre of which were attached light weights, and small ropes in loops, so they might attach themselves to anything brought in contact with them upon the bottom. The boats separated a short

distance, and then pulled in parallel lines up or down the channel, dragging the line with its centre upon the bottom. Many torpedoes were thus taken up. When one was taken, it was dragged upon the marsh and pierced with a rifle-ball or auger, to admit water to drown the charge.

Admiral Thatcher concluded to adopt additional means to clear the channel, in the nature of nets to intercept floating torpedoes; and on the night of the 3d, the boats of the Octopara, with a small boat from the ironclad Chickasaw, got the first net across the river, from the wreck of the Milwaukie to the flat on the east side of the channel.

*Operations of the Army.*—The four X-inch mortars of Company K, Sixth Michigan heavy artillery, Lieut. Edward C. Beardsley in temporary command of the company, came up on the night of the 1st of April, and the mortars were set in the rifle-pits till suitable works could be constructed. Their position was close to the edge of the bluff, four hundred and fifty yards from McDermott, and about the same distance to the left of Mack's twenty-pounder battery. But between the first and second sections of the Sixth Michigan mortars, was a battery of four VIII-inch howitzers of the First Indiana which took position there this day. Lieut. Beardsley's first section opened in the afternoon in a satisfactory manner in presence of Gen. Granger and several other officers, the first two shells being dropped directly on the top of the parapet of McDermott.

Mack's twenty-pounders worried the garrison at different times during the day, but the guns of the latter in his front continued silent; their mortars, however, shelled him considerably. At three, p. m., the Washington artillery on his right again commenced on him throwing shells incessantly to a quarter to five, p. m. His works were struck nine times, but no serious damage was done.

In the front of Gen. A. J. Smith's corps two of the light guns



of the Fourteenth Indiana battery were taken out of position, and two thirty-pounder Parrotts of Hendrick's battery (L, First Indiana heavy artillery), under Lieuts. Clary and Benson, were put in their place. But the construction of platforms was retarded by the garrison's sharpshooters.

Blankenship's battery (B, First Indiana) had been engaged through the night in throwing shells into the garrison to disturb its slumbers. These were thrown at half-hour intervals, and during the night and day his men fired one hundred and twenty-seven rounds. While a number of these Indiana men were standing round their camp-fire, a shell from the garrison came over and fell in the fire. The men escaped injury by quickly dropping upon the ground and rolling down the hill.

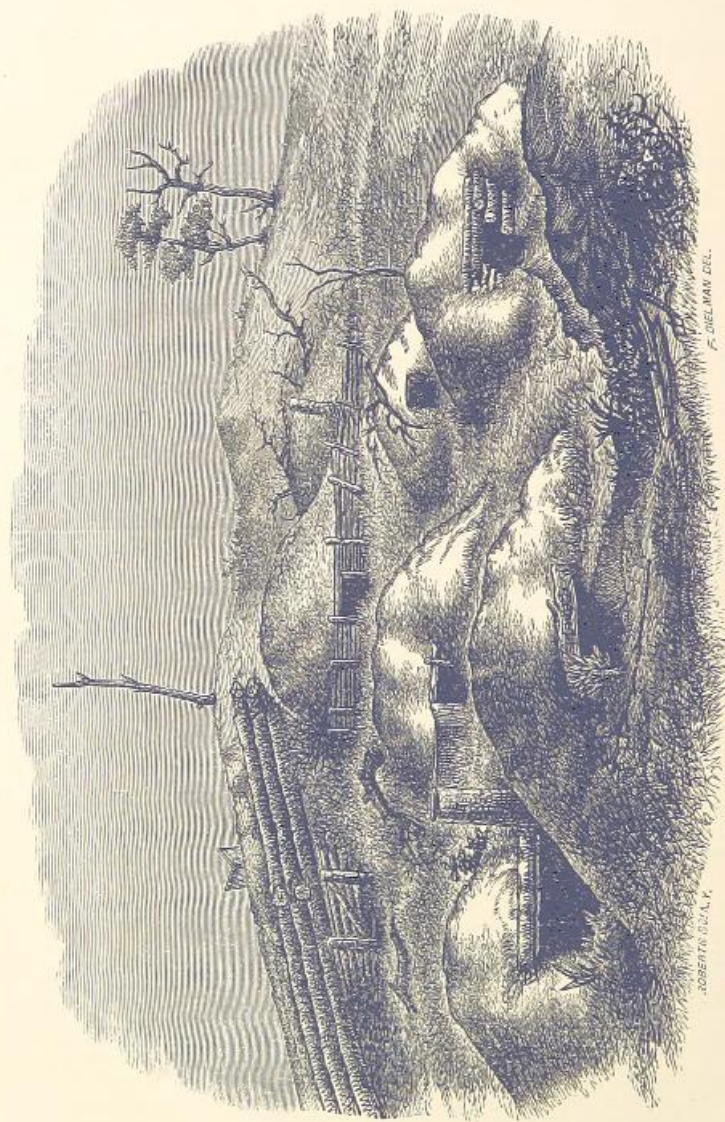
The thirty-pounders (Batteries H and K, First Indiana) on Bay Minette shore were still engaged actively in drawing the attention of Fort Huger from the besiegers' flank, and fired day and night. During the day three men of Battery H were wounded—J. S. Holt by a piece of shell seriously, and Gray and Newman by splinter slight.

In the Thirteenth corps front Battery No. 6 was finished and occupied by two thirty-pounders of the First Indiana Battery (M). Near the extreme left Capt. Bough advanced his VIII-inch howitzer two hundred yards nearer McDermott. Four cohorn mortars were put in position under direction of Lieut. Sibert, First Indiana.

An incident occurred in the front of Marshall's brigade which well illustrates both the soldier's daring and magnanimity. While the Seventh Minnesota was on duty in the advance trench in the daytime, a bird came and lit some yards in front and between their line and the confederates. Many shots were fired at the bird, and it soon dropped to the ground. At this Private Wm. Rowe of Capt. Buck's Company D, jumped up







BOMB-PROOFS—INSIDE BESIEGERS' FIRST PARALLEL (SIXTEENTH CORPS FRONT.)—SPANISH FORT.

over the works and ran out in plain sight of the confederates, picked up the bird and returned unmolested to his place in the trench.

The toil of the besiegers was incessant and severe. They now had only three divisions and one brigade engaged in the siege. The second parallel had been opened; in some places the third; approaches or saps dug and heavy batteries from day to day being constructed. It was by no means smooth work; for in some places the ground was rocky, in others it was filled with stumps and roots, and covered with large logs. The details had become so wearing on the men that the officers sometimes took the musket and went on duty themselves as sharpshooters while the men rested and slept. Besides the works already referred to, the besiegers had in rear of their first or outer line constructed bomb-proof quarters. For the most part these were regular and sunk in the earth. The pits would hold from three to eight men, and so arranged, of course, that the occupants could lie down. They were covered over with layers of logs, sometimes three thicknesses, over which were from one to four feet of earth, varying according to the exposure of their situation and the industry of the occupants.

Among the besiegers the estimate of the strength of the garrison varied from three thousand to ten thousand. The garrison at first under-estimated the number of the besiegers, thinking they did not exceed ten thousand.

The casualties in the garrison were this day reported to be eight killed and sixteen wounded. In Carr's division they were three killed and nine wounded.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Sunday, April 2. . . . Huger and Tracy very vigorously shelled by the enemy's Bay Minette batteries which do some very fine practice. All going on as usual at Spanish fort. Enemy steadily advancing against our salients, particularly on the flanks of our line. Mortar practice pretty lively on both sides at Spanish fort. Making a treadway to the rear of Battery Tracy for commu-



## CHAPTER XVII.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—NINTH DAY.

*April 4.*—Marshall returned with his brigade to his old position on the left of the Sixteenth corps. While in the Thirteenth corps front he had advanced the trenches two hundred yards. His labor had been severe. The details were heavy; each regiment furnishing one half its men daily for duty. Three companies were on fatigue and two on skirmish duty one day and two on fatigue and three on skirmish the next.

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nication with the city, owing to the danger and difficulty of landing in steamers either by night or day at the wharf of Tracy."

"*Monday, April 3.*—Shelling of Batteries Huger and Tracy from the enemy's Parrott batteries as usual. At Spanish fort the enemy appears to be engaged in strengthening his first and second parallels, establishing mortar and heavy artillery batteries and makes but little progress in his approaches. Very heavy artillery practice toward evening. Continual repairs necessary on our line, and the work of extending our left to Bay Minette across the marsh continued as the enemy seems to be most vigorous in front of our left."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*

*Gibson to Maury:* "April 2, 7:30 P. M.—The eighth day has closed. The situation remains unchanged. The enemy in the first day's action succeeded in pushing back my skirmish lines at certain points. He continues to erect very heavy batteries and is using large mortars. But our losses become smaller every day, our ability greater, and the confidence of the officers and men grows stronger and stronger."

*Same to Same:* "April 3, 1865.—We have been thoroughly shelled all night, especially by mortars and there is brisk musketry this morning. I never saw such digging as the enemy does—he is like a mole. He is constructing heavy batteries on my extreme flanks that are going to give me great trouble. I wish I had more men and guns. We have all been up all night. It is digging all night and fighting all day. Be certain to send more wooden embrasures of the patent I requested, iron screens, and the heavy guns."

Returning to his former position Marshall opened a trench from Hubbard's advance parallel toward the left, connecting with the works of the Thirteenth corps, and commenced saps to it from the rear line. This advanced line was only a hundred yards from the salient of the garrison, Battery No. 3.

To fill the gap made by the withdrawal of Marshall, Col. Krez moved his brigade around to its proper position on Benton's left. The ground vacated by Krez was occupied by the Sixteenth corps extending its left.

The brigade of Col. Krez had met with some loss since the 28th in holding its exposed skirmish line. In the Twenty-eighth Wisconsin two had been killed and six wounded; in the Twenty-seventh Wisconsin one had been killed and six wounded; in the Thirty-third Iowa one had been killed and four wounded.

At this time the advance parallels of the besiegers were within a hundred yards of the different salients of the garrison fortifications. The garrison had also extended counter approaches and rifle-pits so that the sharpshooters on both sides were within talking distance.

Forts Huger and Tracy were strengthened by placing bags of sand on the parapets between the embrasures, the filled sand-bags having been sent down the river in the night on flats.

In Granger's front, Battery No. 1, on the extreme left, was finished for eight heavy pieces.

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<sup>1</sup> "At Huger and Tracy preparations are being made for better protection against the enemy's shelling by erecting sand-bag merlons. One X-inch columbiad temporarily displaced to-day. Sand furnished to Tracy and Huger by floating down, at night, flats loaded with filled sand-bags.

"Mortar firing going on steadily all day at Spanish fort. The enemy's batteries are largely increased. The enemy's line now up to within one hundred yards of all of our salients. Tremendous cannonading from four, p. m., till seven, from about thirty to forty guns and a dozen mortars on the part of the enemy. We reply from nearly the same number. But few casualties on our side, not exceeding six or eight all told. One sap-roller appears in front of our left centre."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*

In anticipation of the general bombardment that was to commence at five, P. M., the besiegers' artillery fired but little before that hour. The X-inch mortars of the Sixth Michigan, on the left, did not, however, entirely neglect McDermott; and their fire was answered. A twenty-four-pounder shell exploded at the entrance of Lieut. Beardsley's magazine, but did no harm. Another shell struck among the men while they were at dinner down under the bluff, wounding Corporal Perrin, and arousing an Irishman's apprehensions for the safety of the coffee.

Capt. Blankenship's battery (B, First Indiana) fired twenty rounds per hour from each mortar from five, A. M., till five, P. M. This battery was also disturbed at the dinner-hour. A shell came through the captain's tent and exploded, causing, in the excitement, the dinner to be upset, and "all the queen's-ware to be broken—which, however, was but one cup and saucer."

The two twelve-pounders of Morse's Fourteenth Indiana, which had been withdrawn to give place to thirty-pounders, were put in position on the extreme right.

Lieut. James (Battery I, First Indiana) arrived with detachment, and relieved Lieut. Sibert, acting adjutant, in charge of the cohorn mortars.

The guns of Bay Minette battery were engaged throughout the day.

Capt. Foust having procured a fresh supply of ammunition, his battery of steel guns resumed its original position.

During the day the garrison were quite annoying with their cohorn mortars, and troubled the infantry in their advanced pits exceedingly. The fire from small mortars was troublesome on both sides. The Sixteenth corps had made a number of wooden mortars, which were also quite effective. Each mortar was made of a log about a foot in diameter, sixteen inches in length, and of calibre for a four-inch shell.

Up to and including the 4th of April the loss in the Thir-



teenth corps was twenty-six killed and one hundred and seventy-seven wounded.

*The Navy.*—In the afternoon, the Octorara got afloat and resumed fire on Spanish fort with her one-hundred-pounder Parrott.

*The Garrison.*—Phillips' Tennessee battery, in Red fort (No. 4), had suffered so much from the mortar shells, it was relieved by Capt. James Garrity's Mobile battery. The effective strength of the latter was sixty-seven. It was composed of northern-born men, and had participated in the prominent battles of the Southwest, from Shiloh to Nashville.

*The Bombardment.*—At this date, the besiegers had in position against Spanish fort, thirty-eight siege-guns (including six twenty-pounder rifles, and sixteen mortars), and thirty-seven field guns, all of which (seventy-five), with the Minette bay battery, against Huger and Tracy, opened fire at five, P. M., and continued till seven, P. M. The orders were for each gun to fire every three minutes. There was not much response, except from the guns of Old Spanish fort. It was a well-sustained and grand bombardment. The garrison sought shelter in their bombproofs. Clouds of dust rose from their parapets. "The earth," says a correspondent, "actually trembled from the effect of this mighty fire." Meanwhile, the sharpshooters, in the skirmish trenches or pits, kept up their accustomed firing.

The signal had been given by Mack's battery, the Eighteenth New York. That battery fired three hundred and sixty rounds, and its works were hit seventeen times during the day. In the bombardment there was a premature explosion of one of its guns, which mortally wounded Aaron Vosberg, a most excellent and gallant young soldier.

Two thirty-pounder Parrotts, of Capt. S. E. Armstrong's battery (M, First Indiana heavy artillery), had taken position, eight hundred and fifty yards from McDermott, the preceding

night, and opened fire at the signal for the bombardment. Their fire was answered with great vehemence by the guns of Old Spanish fort; and the shells of the latter dropped thick and fast over the battery of Capt. Armstrong. Once there was a pause of ten or fifteen minutes in their fire, and the gunners of Battery M were congratulating themselves on the happy prospect that they had quit for the day, when they again opened with greater fury, nor ceased till after it was dark.

The No. 1 X-inch mortar, of Company K, Sixth Michigan, exploded a caisson in McDermett, which produced a loud cheer among the besiegers.

The first section of Hendrick's Battery (L, First Indiana), Lieuts. Clary and Benson, opened on Old Spanish fort and Red fort, from Carr's left; and the second section, Lieut. Parker, near McArthur's right, dismounted the columbiad in Red fort; but, not knowing this at the time, the guns continued in the same range and destroyed the embrasure.

During the bombardment, Blankenship's battery threw one hundred and sixty shells inside the garrison works.

Capt. Wimmer observed a transport, loaded with troops, approaching from above, but she did not come within range.

When the bombardment was over, the men received a ration of whiskey; the bands struck up patriotic airs; and cheers echoed and re-echoed from one end of the line to the other.

There was no enthusiasm, of course, in the garrison; yet, a feeling of relief and satisfaction. Owing to the art of bomb-proofs, they had been hurt less than could have been expected; and they had been spared an assault. Gen. Lidell congratulated the garrison commander on his slight loss.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Gibson*: "April 4. . . . Hope you will yet drive away the Yankee devils, and am delighted that you have suffered so little. Will try and get Gen. Maury to send you another VIII-inch columbiad."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—TENTH, ELEVENTH, AND TWELFTH DAYS.

*April 5.*—At this stage of the siege, mortar-shells were thrown into the garrison throughout the night at regular intervals. A ten-inch mortar-shell is a fraction under ten inches in diameter, and weighs very nearly ninety pounds. An eight-inch shell is nearly eight inches in diameter, and weighs about fifty pounds. Some idea can be formed of the noise they produce in exploding. But although that was calculated to break the slumber of the garrison, what was most to be dreaded was their fatal effect when they chanced to strike near troops; for this had been experienced in distressing examples. On this day, a ten-inch shell, fired from Captain Craig's Company A, Sixth Michigan, struck inside the garrison's battery (No. 5, sand-bag battery), and went through six feet of earth and three layers of pine-logs, literally burying twenty-six men, of whom one was killed and five were wounded. During the previous night, Blankenship's battery had thrown fifty-four eight-inch shells inside the garrison works. In course of the day, he fired only six rounds. There was a moderate amount of firing by the besiegers' artillery, but very little from the garrison. The twenty-pounders of the Eighteenth New York were engaged nearly all day but were not replied to. Armstrong's battery was not annoyed, and he, having been directed not to bring on an engagement without orders from the corps commander, his thirty-pounders only fired occasional shots. The X-inch mortars of the Sixth Michigan,



in front of McDermett, were actively engaged, and disabled a twenty-four-pounder howitzer in that fort.

The enterprise of the besiegers on the left was marked, and Gen. Gibson was apprehensive an effort would be made to turn his right.<sup>1</sup>

Capt. Barnes (Company C, Twenty-second Louisiana), while signalling to his VIII-inch mortar, in rear of McDermett, the effect of his fire, was struck by a musket-ball, and fell severely wounded. Up to this time the casualties in his company had been three killed and twenty-three wounded; more than half its effective strength.

This day, Gen. Gibson telegraphed Maury that the garrison flanks were swept by heavy batteries, that his men were worked all the time, and that their lines were thinner than when they had fought under Johnston and Hood. He also asked for a force of negroes, and said he could make good soldiers of them.<sup>2</sup>

From the beginning of the siege, the garrison had been looking for a diversion in their favor, by Forrest. But the blow struck at his forces by Wilson, and the fall of Selma, were

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<sup>1</sup> "At Huger and Tracy operations as usual. And nothing new at Spanish fort except an apprehension on the part of Gen. Gibson that the enemy is attempting to turn our right flank along the marsh, between Blakely river and our extreme right."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer*.

<sup>2</sup> *Gibson to Maury*: "April 5.—Enemy sweeps my flanks with heavy batteries, and presses on at all points. Can't you send me a little craft under my orders. My line is extended now to the water and in it. My men are worked all the time, and I don't believe I can possibly do the work necessary in the dense flats on the flanks. Can't you take a look at the situation to-morrow. I really can't spare any more men for launches. My men are wider apart than they ever were under Generals Johnston and Hood. The works not so well managed nor so strong, and the enemy in larger force, more active, and closer. Can't you send me the detachments belonging to Ector and Holtzclaw. Can't you send a force of negroes, with axes. I can make good soldiers of the negroes."

now well known, and produced a dispiriting effect on the garrison.<sup>1</sup>

*April 6, Eleventh Day.*—A footway was now finished from Fort Tracy over the marsh to Conway's bayou, affording a new, but limited communication for the garrison with Mobile. Affairs appeared to be growing critical, on account of the uncertainty and danger of their communications.<sup>2</sup> The artillerists were cautioned to be prudent of ammunition, to fire only when they saw the enemy, and not to answer his artillery. They had to report how their ammunition was expended, and make requisition every night for what they would need the ensuing twenty-four hours.

The planting of torpedoes in front of the garrison works, and where there appeared most danger of close approach, was renewed. The previous night Gen. Holtzclaw had staked out a new line running off from Red fort, intending to withdraw his left, and thus materially shorten the garrison line; but, in course of the forenoon, Mack's twenty-pounder rifles swept down the stakes with their fire; Holtzclaw told Gibson that the besiegers had already got the range of his proposed new line, and the purpose of occupying it was abandoned. Lumsden's battery on the garrison's left was relieved by Perry's Chattanooga battery, with one hundred and twenty effective men.

*The Besiegers.*—In Granger's front, Battery No. 8, and the

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<sup>1</sup> About this date the Mobile Register said: "We suppose it is useless to conceal that a Yankee raiding party has dashed into Selma, before our forces were concentrated to prevent it. The result is nothing except the loss of the government works at that point."

<sup>2</sup> "At Huger and Tracy nothing new. A good communication is opened with the city from these points by the footway to Conway's bayou. At Spanish fort the enemy are steadily but not rapidly approaching our salients. An engineer company is ordered to both Blakely and Spanish fort to commence mining operations against the enemy's approaches. Three heavy guns removed to Blakely and several mortars, all our operations retarded by the uncertainty and danger of communications."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*



right branch of No. 4, had been finished the previous day. The right branch of Battery No. 8, was finished the 6th.

There was but little artillery firing during the day. Granger ordered the two thirty-pounders of Capt. Armstrong's battery (First Indiana) to be brought to bear in an enfilading fire upon the garrison's rifle-pits in front of Red fort. The embrasures not admitting of this, Armstrong proposed to move one of his guns out on open ground some yards to the left, whence there would be good range. After some hesitation, permission was given him to do this. Fifteen rounds of case shot and shell were fired on the pits, causing the confederate sharpshooters to scamper out of them before night, and several shots were fired during the night. When the gun was taken out a continued fire on the gunners was kept up by sharpshooters in front of McDermott, but they were about eight hundred yards off, and inflicted no injury. Meantime, a rope was attached to the trail of the gun, and men placed in readiness to haul it into the works in case the garrison guns opened upon it.

Blankenship's mortars (Company B, First Indiana) fired only five rounds during the day. Capt. Richard Campbell (Battery I, First Indiana) assumed command of three twenty-pounders in McArthur's front.

Wimmer withdrew his four guns from Minette bay battery, and moved to works in front of Blakely. While withdrawing, there was a heavy fire on the battery from the confederate gunboats.

There was no interruption, of course, of work in the trenches. On the left, the Twenty-third Iowa and Ninety-fourth Illinois were in the front, and established a new line, taking some rifle-pits, in which were found three confederates, dead.

The casualties were light. In A. J. Smith's corps there was one killed (in Eleventh Missouri), and eight wounded.

In Hubbard's brigade, McArthur's division, suspicion was ex-



cited during the afternoon that the garrison was evacuating. Whereupon Lieut. Jules Capon, of the Ninth Minnesota, a brave and enterprising officer, with a detail of a dozen picked men from his regiment, was directed to reconnoitre the garrison works as soon as it should become dark. He succeeded in getting his men through the abatis and to the ditch of Red fort, without arousing attention, and remained there long enough to become satisfied the works were still occupied in force. In withdrawing, he was fired upon, but none of the party were hit.

*April 7—Twelfth Day.—The Navy.*—On the night of the 5th, the channel had been swept with chains by a couple of tugs. At five, A. M., of the 6th, the gunboats steamed up and anchored close to the torpedo net, five thousand one hundred and seventy yards from Spanish fort; did not open fire, however, on account of the presumed exposed condition of the land forces in their advanced rifle-pits. But on the morning of the 7th, the flagship signalled the Octorara to fire, which she did. The fire was continued at intervals during the day, the supply of ammunition not admitting of constant firing.

In Fort Huger, a twelve-pounder howitzer was dismounted; and the elevating screw of a X-inch columbiad on bombproof was shot away, disabling it, by a ten-pounder rifle of the Bay Minette battery.

At Tracy the sand-bag additions to the parapet progressed, and a telegraph was started direct to Mobile. In Spanish fort Capt. Slocum (Washington artillery) had got his disabled columbiad repaired and in position. The garrison experienced increasing danger from the besiegers' enfilading batteries, and constructed additional traverses and bombproofs for cover. Cheveaux-de-friese were also prepared, and at night placed in front of the more damaged and exposed parts of their works.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> " *Friday, April 7.*—At Huger and Tracy the work of constructing merlons progressing, and a telegraph line commenced from Tracy direct to Mobile. At

The strength of the garrison on the morning of April 7, was as follows :

Gibson's brigade (aggregate present).....	674
Ector's       "                       "               .....	659
Holtzclaw's   "                   "               .....	988
Artillery       "                   "               .....	506
<hr/>	
Total.....	2,827
Number of small arms.....	2,047

*The Besiegers.*—The infantry were busy still in advancing their approaches; and the sharpshooting on both sides from the advance rifle-pits rendered it unsafe for a man's head to be exposed there for a moment. In the morning there was a sharp struggle on the left to hold the position which had been gained. The besiegers now used embrasures made of heavy split plank which were set into the parapets, and under the angle of which they fired. The confederates also used wooden embrasures; but they were made of boards and covered over with the earth of the parapet. The men called them "Beauregard screens."

Among the batteries already finished in the Sixteenth corps, was one for two thirty-pounders taken from the Milwaukie, and manned by some of her crew.

A one hundred-pounder Parrott under Lieut. Compton, Battery K (First Indiana), with detail of twenty men, was put in Minette Bay battery.

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Spanish fort unusual activity on the part of the enemy's sappers. His approaches on our right are made by a succession of close parallels without boyaux; and on our left and centre he has gained from thirty to forty feet since yesterday. A new battery is established enfilading a portion of our left and taking our centre in reverse, which with the constant mortar firing on this portion of our line proves to be very annoying. Our troops attempt to remedy this by making additional traverses and bombproofs, and cheveaux-de-friese are placed in front of the exposed and damaged portions of line to protect against any attempt at a coup-de-main."—*Diary of a Confederate Officer.*

In the Thirteenth corps two more batteries, for siege guns, were finished, and the guns put in position. Lieut. Stamper, Battery B, moved his two VIII-inch mortars, with success, a thousand yards to the right, to obtain better range of Red fort.

During the day the artillery firing was very light. In the afternoon there was a heavy fall of rain. The besiegers were getting ready for another grand bombardment; and the garrison, since their arsenal at Selma had been destroyed, felt the need of economizing ammunition.

An artillery officer put down in his diary the following: "The siege progresses splendidly. How different from ——. There it was charge! charge! charge! Here a little more good sense is shown, and a regard had for human life; and the end approaches much more rapidly."

*The Hospital.*—Each corps had its hospital situated two miles to the rear. They were amply supplied and well administered. As fast as was practicable, the patients were sent in steamers to the general hospital in New Orleans. For instance, on the evening of March 31, one hundred of the federal wounded, including three officers, arrived at New Orleans, on the steamer N. W. Thomas, under charge of Surgeon Humeston, assisted by Surgeon Hagy.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT—THIRTEENTH AND LAST DAY.

*Saturday, April 8.—Thirteenth Day.*—On the morning of the 8th, Generals Gibson and Holtzclaw were of the opinion it was time to evacuate. But Lieut.-Col. Williams, who had been chief of artillery in Stewart's corps, expected to finish a battery for four twelve-pounders, on Holtzclaw's left, to enfilade the besiegers' left, and expected to have the guns in position the ensuing night. It was, therefore, concluded to hold on another day, to give Williams an opportunity to try his battery. Meantime, orders were given for all the garrison artillery to open vigorously at four, P. M. In view of the close approach of the besiegers, steps were also taken to have additional torpedoes planted.

*The Navy.*—In the afternoon the guns of Old Spanish fort opened on the boats of the squadron that were sweeping the channel for torpedoes. The Octorara then resumed her effective fire with the one-hundred-pounder Parrott.

*The Besiegers.*—In the Thirteenth corps, Battery No. 12, for three siege guns, was completed. There had now been constructed in this corps, besides the batteries, ten thousand five hundred yards of parallel and sap.

In Bertram's front the works were carried to within one hundred yards of McDermett.

McArthur's division of the Sixteenth corps had constructed three thousand nine hundred and seventy-five yards of parallel, and two thousand and thirty-five yards of sap besides two bat-



SPANISH FORT—VIEW FROM WORKS OF THIRTEENTH CORPS—SHOWING "McDERMOTT."





teries for heavy guns. Hubbard's brigade of that division had approached nearest to the garrison works, the head of the sap from his second parallel being only sixty yards from Red fort.

Carr's division, in addition to work on parallels and saps, had done most of the work of batteries for about fifty guns, including mortars. In his front the siege had been pushed, as everywhere else, with unceasing vigor and industry. There were two well-defined parallels, and some work done on the third; four approaches or saps, two of which admitted of artillery passing under cover; and in front of Moore's brigade there were two approaches extending within a hundred yards of the main works of the garrison. On Carr's right flank, across the swamp, a gabion work had been extended by carrying earth from the high ground, affording cover to sharpshooters, a hundred yards from the garrison's left.

There were now in position in the Minette bay battery four thirty-pounder and two one-hundred-pounder rifles; against Spanish fort, fifty-three siege guns (including nine twenty-pounder rifles and sixteen mortars) and thirty-seven field guns (the Seventh Massachusetts was withdrawn and moved to Blakely): total ninety-six guns. Four siege rifles and five siege howitzers on the left centre enfiladed the garrison's centre and left; and four siege howitzers close in on the extreme right enfiladed their centre.

A bombardment, which proved to be the final one, opened from all these guns at half-past five, P. M., and continued till half-past seven, P. M. The twenty-pounders of the Eighteenth New York, Capt. Mack, again fired the signal.

Gen. Canby was intending to assault the garrison's works the following morning at eight o'clock. But the corps commanders had received instructions, when the investment commenced, to push forward the works as fast as consistent with due care of the men, and to take advantage of every opportunity that

promised successful and decisive results, but not to attempt an assault without that assurance.

Before the bombardment commenced the besiegers took the precaution to double the force of their sharpshooters and the reserves.

The garrison having arranged for a general artillery fire, opened before the bombardment was commenced by the besiegers.

Mack having given the signal, directed his fire principally against McDermett. The shot and shell from the latter came against his battery thick and fast. His works were struck at least fifty times, but not one of his men received even a scratch. Eight guns were being fired from McDermett. Earlier in the day, one of Capt. Mack's guns had done splendid execution on Red fort, in knocking away two of its embrasures, and a solid shot struck down an officer at a distance of three fifths of a mile.

The four thirty-pounders of Capt. Armstrong's battery (M, First Indiana), each fired every half-minute. The section of his battery near the right of the Thirteenth corps, had been much annoyed by the garrison's sharpshooters, and one of the cannoniers, Private Wm. H. Sparks, was badly wounded in the forehead.

Up to five o'clock in the afternoon, Capt. Blankenship's mortars had fired forty rounds. During the bombardment they fired one hundred and twenty rounds.

The batteries of Bough, Cox, and Hendricks, were doing good service. The latter had one man wounded. In Cox's battery four were wounded. It has been seen that the greater part of the First Indiana heavy artillery was engaged in the siege. The regiment was under the command of Col. B. F. Hays, who was assisted during the siege by Maj. James M. Connelly, in front of the Sixteenth corps, and Maj. J. W. Day, in front of





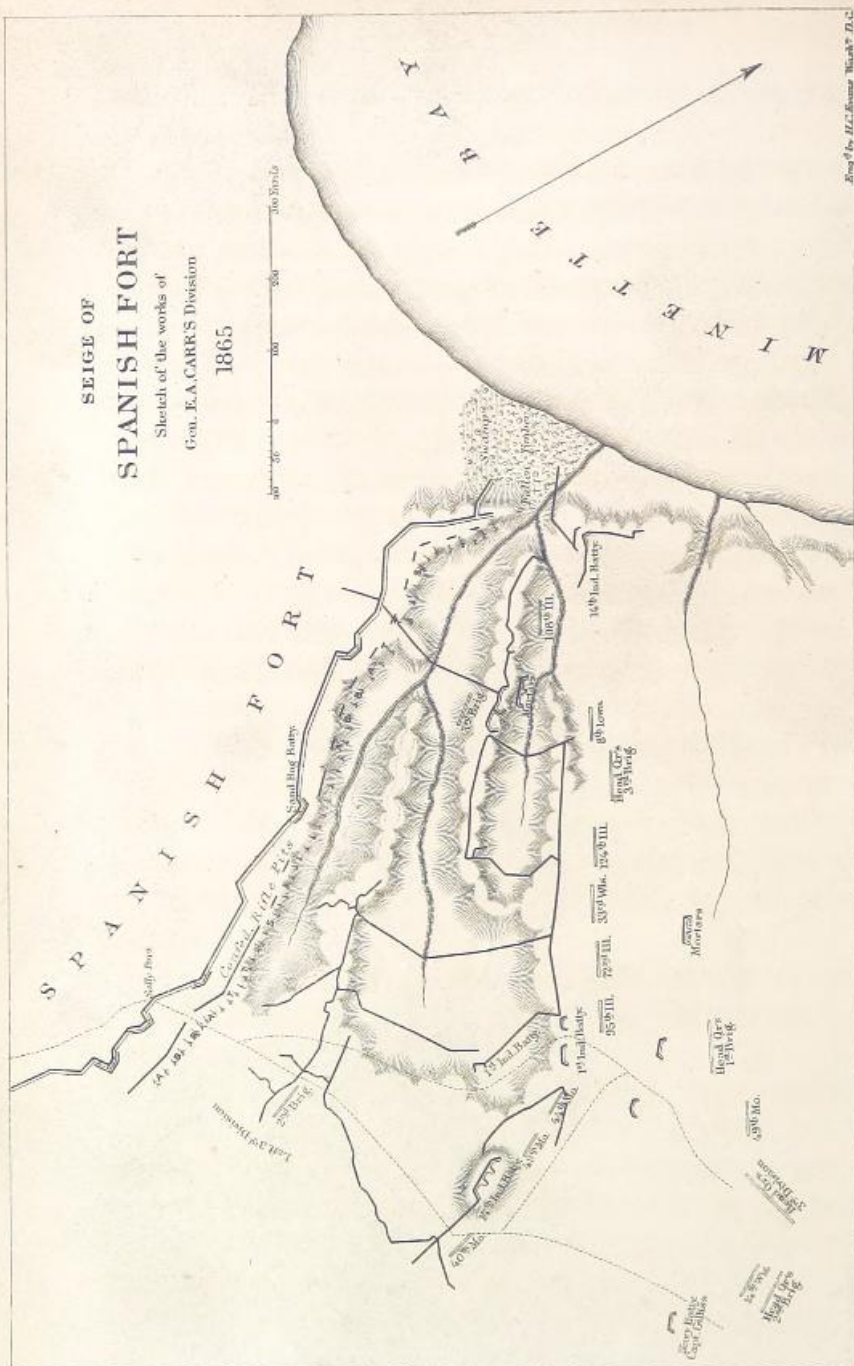
# SEIGE OF SPANISH FORT

Sketch of the works of

Gen. E.A. CARR'S Division

1865

0 50 100 200 300 Yards



the Thirteenth corps. During the siege, Battery B expended five hundred and seventy rounds of ten-inch shell, and six hundred and thirty-nine of eight-inch shell; C, two hundred and eighty-six rounds; H, seven hundred and one rounds; I, four hundred and eleven rounds; K, seven hundred and twenty rounds; L, six hundred and forty-three rounds; M, four hundred rounds.

The fire of so many large guns, and the loud explosion of shells, produced one of those sublime scenes which seldom occur, even in the grandest operations of war. There is scarcely anything in the phenomena of nature to which it could be compared; certainly not the distant murmur of the thunder, nor its near and startling crash. Yet, in mountain storms may have been witnessed a scene to which this grand commingling of many thunders forms some comparison. It is when a storm having risen, the dark clouds seem to linger on the mountain-tops, and from all quarters of the heavens the awful bolts burst forth simultaneously.

#### ASSAULT.

Gen. Carr having pushed his works on the right about as close to the garrison works as practicable, concluded to take advantage of the cannonading, and carry, by assault on their flank, some two hundred yards of the confederate left, and gain a crest covered with a grove of pines. The possession of that point he rightly judged would give him a commanding position for a battery, and afford an effective fire in reverse on their works by infantry.

Ector's brigade, in his front, comprised the Ninth, Tenth, Fourteenth, and Thirty-second Texas regiments, and the Twenty-ninth and Thirty-ninth North Carolina regiments.

After the bombardment had commenced, and at about six o'clock, Col. Geddes, commanding the brigade, went to Lieut.-

Col. Bell, then commanding the Eighth Iowa infantry volunteers, informed him that Gen. Carr and himself had concluded to advance two companies on the crest of the hill, well up to the confederate works, as a picket guard, and that they could intrench themselves during the night. He instructed Col. Bell to accomplish this in any manner he chose, but to be particular to keep his regiment behind the gabion work, which was on the right, across the swamp. Col. Geddes inquired how long it would take him to get ready and commence the advance of the two companies, so that he could return to the rifle-pits and direct the fire of the brigade, and attract the attention of the garrison forces in his front. Col. Bell replied, "Fifteen minutes;" yet he had nearly a quarter of a mile to go, the companies to select, and arrangements to make. At ten minutes past six, his regiment was in position behind the gabion work. Company A, Capt. Henry Muhs commanding, and Company G, Lieut. Henry Vineyard commanding, were selected for the advance, and both companies promptly moved around the right of the gabion work, and gallantly deployed forward on the centre, Capt. Muhs commanding the line of skirmishers. They had nearly one hundred yards of ground to pass over before reaching their objective point, the most of which was wet and soft, and covered thickly with fallen trees. Col. Bell accompanied them till he was satisfied they would gain the desired position, when he returned to the balance of the regiment behind the work. But his little assaulting party encountered obstacles at every step. Even if they did not pause to fire, their progress could not be rapid, and the Texas troops, from behind their works, were on the alert, and resisted them with as sharp a musketry-fire as was in their power. About the time the movement commenced, a cheer was given by the rest of the division to give the impression that a general assault was intended, and to draw attention from the real point of attack. This made the



Texas troops only the more emulous to hold their ground, and their fire grew more intense and deadly. They could also perceive too well its effect—for a number of the gallant young men of the Eighth had already fallen. The remainder of the party had about come to a pause, and were sharply engaging the Texans, yet with disadvantage. Col. Bell then took the responsibility of sending forward Company H, Lieut. Ball commanding, to their support. And feeling anxious about the fate of those in front, and his regiment, on account of the low position they occupied, not being able to cover them at all with their fire, he sent Lieut. Clark, of Company E, to Col. Geddes, for permission to advance with the balance of his command. The latter, behind the gabion-works, could see the contest their comrades were engaged in, and were eager to rush forward to their assistance. Col. Bell feared that the assaulting party, if unsupported, would finally be driven back, in which case they would be almost annihilated. In a few moments, therefore, after Lieut. Clark had started off, he ordered the remainder of the regiment forward over the gabion-work, crossing himself in the centre, and each wing closing in and following him over, a few at a time. Arriving on the ground held by the advance companies, it was found to be too hot a place to stop at with safety, and so, with his gallant command, he charged over the confederate works without halting. The resistance was so vehement that his men had to engage the Texans sharply before forming, and they were, of course, in much disorder; but there was no hesitating and no flinching. Col. Bell now noticed that a mortar-battery in his rear was bursting shells just over him, not knowing who he was. Some one happily suggested to him to plant the regimental colors on the captured parapet, which was done, and he also waved his hat for the battery to throw its shells farther up the line. A number of the Eighth had fallen before reaching the garrison works. Early in the assault, Henry Vineyard, first lieutenant, Company

G, was struck in the left arm by a musket-ball; but hardly noticing it he pushed on. Near the crest of the hill his left thigh was fractured, and it proved to be a mortal wound. Some of his comrades gathered around him, but he said: "Pay no attention to me, boys—move on."

Col. Bell sent information to Col. Geddes of his success, and requested support. But it was dark and his regiment had been engaged an hour before any assistance came.

Meantime, the musketry fire was intense. For the rest of Carr's division was maintaining a constant fire from their front, partly as a diversion to the assault. At a distance the sound was terrible. It seemed as if the contestants were grappling in a close death struggle. And they were.

On entering the works the Eighth Iowa became furiously engaged with the Texas and North Carolina troops, and many fell on both sides. But the Eighth kept forming as they fought; and rushing closer and closer upon their adversaries finally made them yield. Those who could not escape they captured. Such was the clamor of the firing on all parts of the line, that this combat, sharp as it had been, was hardly discernible by those not engaged in it. Hence those of the Texans next on the right, being in detached pits, were surprised when the Eighth Iowa advanced upon them. There were from four to a dozen of them in a pit. The pits were deep and a few yards apart. Detachments of the Eighth rushed eagerly upon them demanding their surrender. Some of them complied. But there were many who refused, even when the bayonet was at their breast, and the muzzle of the musket at their head. They fought to the last moment, and then, with the words, "I never will surrender" on their lips, met death in a fearless manner. Some were taken prisoners who were less noble and brave, for, after being ordered to surrender by the men of the Eighth, they would first fire on them, and then throw up both hands and surrender.



Lieut.-Col. Bell, with his command, captured about three hundred yards of the confederate works, three stand of colors, and three hundred and fifty prisoners.

The loss of the regiment was five enlisted men killed, three commissioned officers and seventeen enlisted men wounded, some mortally. The officers wounded were Capt. F. P. Kettenring, Company B; Lieut. Henry Vineyard (mortally), and Lieut. Spencer Smith, Company A.

Entering the garrison works alone, maintaining there a severe struggle, and, finally, in a victorious manner, sweeping along the rear, capturing works and prisoners, was a daring and romantic exploit, and justly entitles the Eighth Iowa to brilliant distinction. It was an achievement which called forth and well illustrated the best elements of soldiership.

It was some time after dark before any regiment came to Col. Bell's support. The first troops that entered the works after him was the Eighty-first Illinois, Lieut.-Col. Rogers commanding. It had three men wounded in the engagement that evening. Next followed the One Hundred and Eighth Illinois, Col. Turner, and the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Illinois, Col. Howe. Each of these regiments, and their commanders, did all that was required of them in the action, in a gallant manner. Col. Geddes, the brigade commander, also came up, and apprehending an attempt on the part of the garrison to recover the works which had been captured, placed Lieut.-Col. Bell, with the Eighth Iowa, outside of the garrison works, fronting toward them. About the same time he placed Col. Turner, of the One Hundred and Eighth Illinois, in temporary command of all the troops of his brigade present.

As soon as Gen. Carr had learned the success of the Eighth Iowa, he gave orders for a line of rifle-pits to be thrown up at the extent of the ground taken, and perpendicular to the garrison works. And the work was commenced.



Carr then hastened to the naval battery, where were Gens. Canby and A. J. Smith, and informed the commanding general what had been done; and he was ordered to follow up the advantage gained as far as possible.

In the mean time, the firing had been very sharp on the other flank in front of McDermott. The Nineteenth Iowa were in the advance rifle-pits, and their fire and that of the batteries had about silenced the guns in that work. The garrison was then so much pressed that Col. Bruce was apprehensive of an attack to drive him back, and he had ordered bayonets to be fixed. Pretty soon the Twenty-third Iowa, Col. Glasgow, came up to the front on the double quick, and Bruce then expected an assault was to be made.

As soon as Gen. Gibson learned that the line had been broken on his left, he directed Gen. Holtzclaw to have it restored; but he was informed by the latter that the Texas brigade was doubled up, and in confusion, and that the attacking force was too strong to be driven back. These officers then had a hurried consultation, and determined it was best to evacuate. But to render this safe it was necessary, of course, that they should hold Carr's division in check; and reinforcements were sent as soon as possible for that purpose.

The Eighth Iowa was first brought to a stand by Coleman's North Carolina regiment and a detachment of garrison (or provost) guards, commanded by Lieut. A. G. Clark, of Gen. Gibson's staff, and Lieut. Holtzclaw, aide to Gen. Holtzclaw. This force formed perpendicular to their main works. Its strength was between two hundred and three hundred, and must have felt it was confronting superior numbers. Nevertheless they realized that the safety of the garrison depended upon their valor, and also that it was perilous to remain there on the defensive. A charge was ordered and attempted. But Carr's advance remained steadfast, except that a few skirmishers were

driven back, and the charge repulsed with loss. The two aides, rallying their men, led them forward with a dauntless spirit. Lieut. Clark was killed; Lieut. Holtzclaw, severely wounded. It was this bold front that enabled the garrison safely to escape.

Col. Zacharie, commanding Twenty-fifth Louisiana infantry, had now come up with some sixty men of his regiment. He had left his position near McDermett and had double-quickened to Gibson's headquarters, and thence out to the left, with instructions to do what he could to restore the line. He first formed, with his left covering the treadway, and his right thrown forward, and soon afterward advanced. In a short time he sent forward a few men as scouts to reconnoitre, but they returned saying they could see nothing of the federal line. He sent others but with no better success. In about an hour and a half he sent forward a captain, one sergeant, and two men from the Twenty-second Louisiana, telling them to go till they discovered the federal line. They went but were captured. The ground in front of the federals was thickly covered with timber and underbrush, and cut by deep ravines. It being also dark, it was natural that they should be cautious and make sure of the advantage already gained.

Gibson was withdrawing his forces on the treadway across the swamp. This treadway extended out to the river at Fort Huger, where the garrison crossed over in boats and embarked as fast as possible on transports. But the treadway was only two feet wide, and the passage over it was slow. Moreover, to prevent noise, the troops took off their shoes and stockings and walked barefooted.

The purpose of evacuating was cautiously imparted and went round to the officers in a whisper; for it was apprehended some of the troops would loudly object. The first movements, therefore, were in the nature of a feint. When the right wing left



their quarters, many of the men thought they were going to reinforce the left.

At about nine o'clock, Capt. Garrity sent in a requisition for ammunition. The lieutenant brought back a handful of spikes to spike the guns. He and his command left an hour afterward. Between ten and eleven, Gen. Holtzclaw informed Col. Zacharie that he was evacuating, and to exercise his discretion as to when he would withdraw. In a short time after Zacharie withdrew as rear-guard, with the Sixteenth Louisiana, Lieut. Col. Lindsay, who had made the charge the morning of 27th March, as rear-guard proper.

Before their final departure, however, a party of these troops had gone up to within fifty yards of Carr's advance, and on receiving a volley fell back and were seen no more. During the evening one of the confederate parties that charged Carr's advance, came up within thirty yards calling out "we surrender," and then fired. The Eighth Iowa fired on them and fixed bayonets, at which they faced about and ran rapidly back.

Soon after the Eighth Iowa made a lodgment, Carr had ordered Col. Moore to leave three hundred men in the trenches and with the balance of his brigade move round to the right to reinforce Geddes' brigade. After having made this movement, Moore set the Ninety-fifth Illinois, Col. Blanding, to opening a road through the abatis and works for troops and artillery to pass; it being the general impression that the garrison's left was withdrawn merely to an interior line. He also posted the Thirty-third Wisconsin so as to flank the confederates should they attempt to change their supposed front.

At nine o'clock, perceiving that Geddes' brigade had not developed this supposed new line of the confederates, on his own responsibility he moved back to his old front. Then, by his directions, Major James, Seventy-second Illinois, with the three hundred men who had been left in the trenches



charged the garrison skirmishers remaining in the advance pits, unconscious of the evacuation, and captured them easily. Moore then moved the balance of his brigade over the main works.

About the same time Ward's brigade captured the garrison skirmishers in its front. Some of the latter called out, "Don't shoot, Yanks, we are coming in." And they were as good as their word.

Moore soon wheeled to the left, charged along the garrison works in reverse and flank, and captured a number of prisoners, and kept on till he got to Old Spanish fort where a few more prisoners were captured. Learning there from a prisoner how the garrison had escaped, he, with the Thirty-third Wisconsin, hastened down to the foot-bridge but was too late to accomplish anything.

Geddes with his brigade reached Old Spanish fort between eleven and twelve, and the men being tired after so much watching and fighting, arms were stacked and they were allowed to rest.

There was now a scramble for the hams and corn-meal left by the garrison; and especially was there a scramble for possession of the captured guns.

At midnight, the Octorara aimed a hundred-pounder shell at Old Spanish fort, and although it went some distance beyond, the troops thought it prudent to change their position for the present. After leaving proper guards over the captured property, Carr's division returned to their quarters, having in their possession between four hundred and five hundred prisoners. It had done a splendid day's work.

As soon as Gen. Canby was informed of the lodgment made by the Eighth Iowa, he sent notice of the fact to Granger, who at once communicated the agreeable intelligence to his corps. It produced much enthusiasm. The men cheered all along the line.

The divisions on Carr's left it appears took the confederate pickets in their respective fronts. But this was not done till after midnight. In McArthur's division, Capt. French, Fifth Minnesota, of Hubbard's brigade, having charge of the sharpshooters, captured those in front of that brigade, and was followed over the works by the Forty-seventh Illinois, Maj. Bonham commanding. McArthur's division captured one commissioned officer and forty-nine enlisted men.

The ground in front of the confederate main works was considerably mined with torpedoes—or as they were called, *sub-terra* shells. Marshall's entire brigade, of McArthur's division, moved into the fort before daylight. There were some confederate dead, then, to be seen in their front lying upon the ground. Of these one appeared to have been killed by a musket-ball while planting a torpedo. Close by him was a spade; also a torpedo planted about two feet in the ground, but not yet covered. They buried him there with it.

In front of Day's brigade, Benton's division, Capt. Shepherd, Company F, Ninety-first Illinois, had charge of the skirmish line, and hearing the shouts of Carr's division entered the works in his front unopposed, with a detachment of the Ninety-first and the Fiftieth Indiana. In the brigade front of Col. Krez a detachment of his brigade first entered under Maj. Boydston, of the Thirty-third Iowa, and on the extreme left, at about midnight, Col. McNulta with the Forty-ninth Illinois entered McDermott capturing the picket in front, and soon after had the colors raised over that heavy work amid the loud cheers of the delighted men.

The siege of Spanish fort was at an end. About five hundred prisoners and all the artillery, nearly fifty pieces, captured. Bertram's brigade was ordered to remain, and garrison Spanish fort, with instructions to collect and take charge of the ordnance and other property. All the rest of the infantry, and

most of the artillery, were ordered to move immediately to Blakely.

In the Thirteenth corps the loss had been: in Benton's division, sixteen killed, one hundred and sixteen wounded, twenty-seven captured, and one missing in action—total, one hundred and sixty; in Bertram's brigade, about eighty, killed and wounded.

In McArthur's and Carr's divisions of the Sixteenth corps, the entire loss, in the siege, was twenty-six killed, three hundred and nineteen wounded and captured.

As soon as Gen. Canby knew of Carr's assault, he telegraphed to Gen. Steele, at Blakely, to send down a brigade, to reinforce that part of the line. Slack's brigade moved down promptly, and reported to Gen. Smith, but the latter sent them back, saying he wanted no assistance. While this brigade was resting, near the shore of Bay Minette, and the men were talking and laughing, a part of the garrison, in their retreat, were passing along on the marsh, not many yards from them, and within hearing.

*Retreat of the Garrison.*—As the rear-guard of the garrison were stepping upon the treadway, they heard tremendous cheering up at McDermott, which must have been soon after the Ninety-fourth Illinois had entered. Shortly after, they heard cheering on the road leading to Blakely, and conjectured their victors were already on the march for that place; but the troops they heard must have been Slack's brigade, which started back to Blakely soon after midnight.

There was no little excitement among the confederates as they thronged the marshy bank at the end of the treadway. Some shells had passed closely over them from the right of the Sixteenth corps, as they had come over the treadway, and the place they occupied was commanded by several of the besiegers' batteries. Wind and tide were against them, and they thought



it unsafe to use any other vessels than the light-draught blockade-runners. Their passage over to Huger was, therefore, slow, and they were still huddled on the marshy bank, with a prospect of daylight finding hundreds of them still there. At this juncture, it being midnight, Col. Lockett, chief engineer, proposed to Gen. Gibson that a portion of the troops endeavor to make their way up to Blakely through the marsh. Being acquainted with the locality, he offered to guide the column himself. The suggestion was adopted, and about a thousand of the garrison took up the march for Blakely. The distance was five miles. The march was difficult, but not so difficult as might have been apprehended; for there are few things the soldier's resolution cannot overcome. The route lay through mud and water, through marsh grass, canebrakes, or thick underbrush, and over bayous. The men often sank down in the swamps, and sometimes had to be pulled out by their comrades. It was reported that some were lost, but the better opinion is they all arrived safely at Blakely. They reached that place at dawn, thoroughly exhausted and presenting a singular appearance. In course of the day, they proceeded on steamers to Mobile.

## CHAPTER XX.

### OBSERVATIONS ON THE SIEGE OF SPANISH FORT.

GEN. Beauregard considered it a mistake for the confederates to garrison any part of the Eastern shore of Mobile bay. His opinion was that Huger and Tracy should have been made self-sustaining forts, and that the main garrison should be in Mobile. That appears to be the better opinion.

The object of holding Spanish fort was to protect Huger by preventing the establishment of batteries to bombard the latter. But it really could not effect much in that respect, because some distance north of Spanish fort, on the shore of Bay Minette, the site of batteries actually established, guns could be placed which in two weeks time would have crushed Huger and Tracy.

Nevertheless, there was an advantage to the confederates in having Spanish fort. It was a cover whence parties could have been sent out to obstruct the communications of the federals, and operating as the former could on interior lines they could have concentrated a sufficient force there to cause much annoyance.

This suggests the answer to the opinion expressed by some confederate engineers, that it was a mistake in the federal commander to have noticed Spanish fort at all, they holding, that it would have been better for his purpose to have passed those works and attempted the destruction of Huger and Tracy, with batteries on Bay Minette or shore; or passing all the eastern-shore garrisons to have gone round to the confluence of the Tombigbee

and the Alabama, the occupation of Mobile by the confederates being then a question of supplies. Undoubtedly the evacuation of Spanish fort could have been compelled by indirect operations, yet before the accomplishment of that, was there not too much danger to be apprehended to the communications, if an enterprising enemy should be left in a strong position on the very line necessary to use? On the 12th April, Gen. Maury left Mobile, with four thousand five hundred infantry. About five hundred had been captured at Spanish fort, three thousand at Blakely, and the killed and wounded must have numbered at both places five hundred; so, that at the beginning of the siege his effective force must have been about nine thousand. If an opportunity had warranted, this force could, with but little trouble, have concentrated at Spanish fort. But it would have been dangerous to have had half that force sallying out from that garrison.

The garrison fully expected to be assaulted on the 27th of March. That was one reason why it was not best to assault. The character of the works were not then fully known to the federals. Furthermore, there was no pressing necessity nor special object to be gained by an immediate assault. On the contrary not much would have been gained in time as the army would still have been waiting for supplies. As has been seen, some portions of the fortifications around Spanish fort were quite elaborate, as also the obstructions in front; and they had been made by skilful engineers. The troops behind them were veterans. Ordinary prudence would dictate that the besiegers should at least have one line of works behind which they could fall back in security in case of an unexpected accident or reverse. Nevertheless if a general assault had been ordered on the first day or on any subsequent day, there is no doubt it would have been successful. And this is the opinion of the garrison officers. But it would have been stubbornly resisted, and success would



have cost many valuable lives. The best place for the assault was where it occurred ; for it was the weakest part of the garrison's line. The fact that it was unexpected and the darkness probably are the reasons for its not being followed up rapidly enough to capture all the garrison. Gen. Canby had already determined to carry the works by a general assault the next morning at eight o'clock, which no doubt would have been a lucky hour ; for the garrison commander had cautioned his troops to "be prepared for an assault every morning before daylight, every day at twelve, M., and every evening before dark." An assault would not have been expected at eight.

The besiegers and garrison alike are entitled to praise for constant industry and for energy. The besiegers had the most work to do ; and the works constructed will long remain as evidence of their willing toil.

The garrison commander, Gen. Gibson, was competent and active, and inspired his troops with enthusiasm. He was highly complimented by his superior officers for his conduct during the siege. Second to him in command was Gen. Holtzclaw, also an accomplished and earnest officer. In fact the officers and troops comprising the garrison were remnants of many historic campaigns, and possessed no small share of culture and spirit.

The only neglect which can be cited against the garrison was their failure to construct strong and connected works on their left down across the swamp. This is where they were assaulted. Their works there were disconnected and their occupants were captured in detail. More industry and care there would have enabled them to repulse the attack, or would have prevented the attack that was made.

The garrison displayed uncommon resolution and courage in the frequency of its sorties. About a dozen must have been made in all. One was attended with brilliant success. Holtz-

claw had arranged for two more sorties on the night of the 8th. They were intended against the right and left of McArthur.

It appears that a formal siege of Spanish fort, with heavy artillery, was not decided upon till after the investment. Siege batteries were then sent for and brought on transports from the forts at the mouth of the bay. During the siege the ammunition was brought up from Fort Morgan, and the labor of landing it there was performed by the Sixth Michigan.

Some experienced confederate artillerists at Spanish fort expressed the opinion that the firing of the besiegers' land batteries was not generally good. While the results of the latter's fire must be their justification, it is proper to remark that there was some complaint about the ammunition. Col. Hays, commanding First Indiana heavy artillery, states in his report that the Hotchkiss pattern of solid shot would *end over* when fired, and that the shells would burst prematurely. The shells, he says, were made more effective by emptying out the powder with which they were charged and refilling them with sand, and then using them as solid shot.

*Always seek an Enfilading Fire.*—The engineer operations of the besiegers were directed by Gen. Comstock and Col. McAllister, and were conducted with skill and energy. Positions were soon selected and batteries started whence damaging enfilading fire could be delivered; an object ever to be kept in view in the use of all arms.

*Have the Trenches continuous, and Approaches secure.*—The stumps and fallen trees afforded so much cover to the besiegers' skirmishers that even the first or second day they got out some hundreds of yards beyond any continuous line of rifle-pits. They continued to occupy such advanced positions before approaches to them were started; and were consequently in a very exposed situation. The result of this was the loss of a captain and twenty men in Benton's front. If, as should have been done,

an approach had been started and followed close up to the line occupied by the skirmishers, they could then have retreated when so severely shelled, or reinforcements could have been sent to them. As it was, they were at the mercy of the garrison. In a siege, the skirmishers or picket should be but a short distance from the advance line of works, unless they have a safe approach from that line to their posts. The loss of twenty men in a siege, out of rifle-pits, has much more moral effect than the loss of the same number on an open battle-field. Scipio is said to have been overjoyed when he inflicted on Cæsar a loss of only twenty-seven men, and that on open ground.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### SIEGE OF BLAKELY—SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH DAYS.

*April 3—Second Day of the Siege.*—The ground lying between the combatants, viewed from a distance, appeared level, but it was much cut up by ravines, the sides of which were scalloped with numerous and deep depressions. Some of the ravines ran parallel with the confederate works, others perpendicular to them, and affording a damaging fire for their artillery. Along the bottoms of the principal ravines ran clear and gurgling brooks, half concealed by the luxuriant bushes and vines, and the banks of which were marshy. The general elevation of the ground was eighty feet above the water, and sixty feet was, perhaps, the greatest depth of any of the ravines.

Where the Second division commenced its first line of intrenchments, a thousand yards from the main line of the confederates, the ground was a little higher than that occupied by the latter; and from that position there was a gradual decline for three hundred yards toward the front. The ground occupied by the colored division was about on a level with the confederate works. The position of both divisions was favorable on two accounts—it was in the woods, and there was an abundance of good running water.

In Hawkins' division the work of intrenchment was continued; but that division suffered considerably from the confederate artillery, and especially from the gunboats, which, to some extent, had an enfilading fire. Scofield's brigade was held in reserve; but at night the Fiftieth, Col. Gilchrist, and

the Fifty-first, Col. Webber, were sent to the front, and the brigade commander was there with them till eleven, P. M., when the work was ordered discontinued.

In the Second division, Moore's brigade closed up to the right, connecting with Spiceley's brigade; but between them was a wooded ravine and running stream. The latter was bridged during the day, and both brigades made considerable progress in the first strong and continuous line of intrenchments.

Spiceley's brigade was extended two hundred yards to the right to connect with Hawkins' division. And in the evening the skirmishers of that brigade gained thirty yards to the front, and established new detached pits.

The camp of each regiment was close to the first line of intrenchments, and so arranged as to have some natural shelter of the ground.

In Spiceley's brigade, the Twenty-fourth Indiana, Lieut.-Col. Sears, was on the right. Next, on the left, were the Sixty-seventh Illinois, Col. Busey; the Sixty-ninth Indiana, Lieut.-Col. Perry; the Seventy-sixth Illinois, Lieut.-Col. Vifquain. In Moore's brigade, the Eighty-third Ohio, Lieut.-Col. Baldwin, was on the right, and next the One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio, Col. Kelly; the Twentieth Iowa, Lieut.-Col. Leake; the Thirty-seventh Illinois, Col. Black; and the Thirty-fourth Iowa, Col. Clark.

The casualties in the division, were one killed and five wounded. Of the latter was Col. Spiceley, who was not, however, stopped from his active duties.

Toward evening, certain movements of the confederates in front of Moore's brigade, excited the suspicion of a sortie, and Hotchkiss' Second Connecticut battery was sent round to the left; but it did not go into position, and returned to its camp, near the Stockton road, at dark.

Gen. Steele had his headquarters at O. Sibley's. The headquarters of the Second division were moved from near the Stockton road to a ravine at a point six hundred yards in rear of the centre of the division. The headquarters of the Colored division were also in a ravine in rear of about the centre of the division.

Veatch's division, of the Thirteenth corps, having received orders, at midnight of the 2d, to move immediately to reinforce Steele, arrived before Blakely at daylight of the 3d; and in course of the forenoon took position, with a brigade front, across the Pensacola road. But Garrard's division, of the Sixteenth corps, having also come up from C. Sibley's on the 3d, went into position on the left of the Pensacola road, a thousand yards from the confederate works, Col. Rinaker's brigade being on the right, Gen. Gilbert's in the centre, and Col. Harris' on the left. Veatch's division was then withdrawn and remained near O. Sibley's, as a reserve.

During the ensuing night, Garrard's division covered its front with a line of rifle-pits, and the skirmishers of each brigade occupied ground some distance in advance. The Tenth Kansas, of Gilbert's brigade, had three men wounded, one mortally.

In Harris' brigade, the Eleventh Wisconsin supported the skirmish line, and kept within fifty yards of it. At eleven, P. M., the skirmish line was warmly engaged, and the commanding officer of the Eleventh sent forward a company to reinforce it. At the same time he received information that the confederates had come out of their works, and were flanking the skirmishers on the left. He then sent Companies E and G to protect the flank.

The firing continued through the night, but darkness deprived it of effect, except to weary both sides equally and hold each other at bay.

During the day the sharpshooters of the confederates main-



tained a watchful fire, and at intervals their artillery was sharp and savage. They had already disabled two guns by firing, and the commander sent for more.<sup>1</sup>

*April 4—Third Day of Siege of Blakely.*—In the Second division, the work progressed on the first and second lines of intrenchments, and the same was occurring on Hawkins' left. In the afternoon, both divisions got a new supply of intrenching tools, and the work went on faster. Toward evening, the Second division was preparing to advance its skirmish-line. Soon after five, the men cheered, on account of the grand bombardment of Spanish fort, the mighty clamor of which was plainly heard. The shouts from many thousand voices made the confederates think that they were going to be assaulted, and at sight of the skirmish-line of Moore's brigade they fell back rapidly to an interior line of pits, so that Moore's skirmishers, consisting of details from each regiment of the brigade, advanced nearly three hundred yards without resistance. This carried his line out of the woods, and upon a sort of plateau on a level with the garrison's main works, and only five hundred yards distant therefrom. Intrenchments were then commenced on the line thus gained and continued, but the work was difficult, for there were numerous stumps, and the surface was strewn with fallen pines.

In front of Spicley's brigade the ground was more earnestly

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "April 3.—No change of importance here. Much firing and some shelling during night, upon enemy attempting to establish line of skirmish pits."

*Same to Same*: "April 3.—Will you send another 'Blakely' gun, in place of one which exploded at the muzzle to-day?"

*Same to Same*: "April 3, 8:45 P. M.—Please send me the Blakely gun as soon as possible, as two of the guns on this line have been disabled and sent to Mobile for repairs. Enemy made an attempt to establish their picket line on our centre just at dark."

*Same to Same*: "April 3, 8:45 P. M.—Please send me, by first boat, a quantity of two-inch plank, oak if possible, to make screens for the guns."

contested, and his skirmishers gained only one hundred and fifty yards. In making the advance Sergeant J. W. Ficklin, of the Twenty-fourth Indiana, exhibited special gallantry. No loss was then suffered. Later in the evening Corporal Hawkins of the Twenty-fourth was wounded.

In Pile's and Scofield's front of Hawkins' division, the lines were advanced about two hundred yards. But that division suffered severe loss as well from the gunboats as the sharpshooters and artillerists in front.

Up to this time no artillery had been used by the besiegers. But during the night a sunken battery, with good cover for the gunners, was made on the Stockton road on a line with the first parallel, for one of the ten-pounder rifles of the Second Connecticut battery. The gun, with full detachment under Lieut. Gray, was put in position sometime after midnight, being hauled a quarter of a mile by hand.

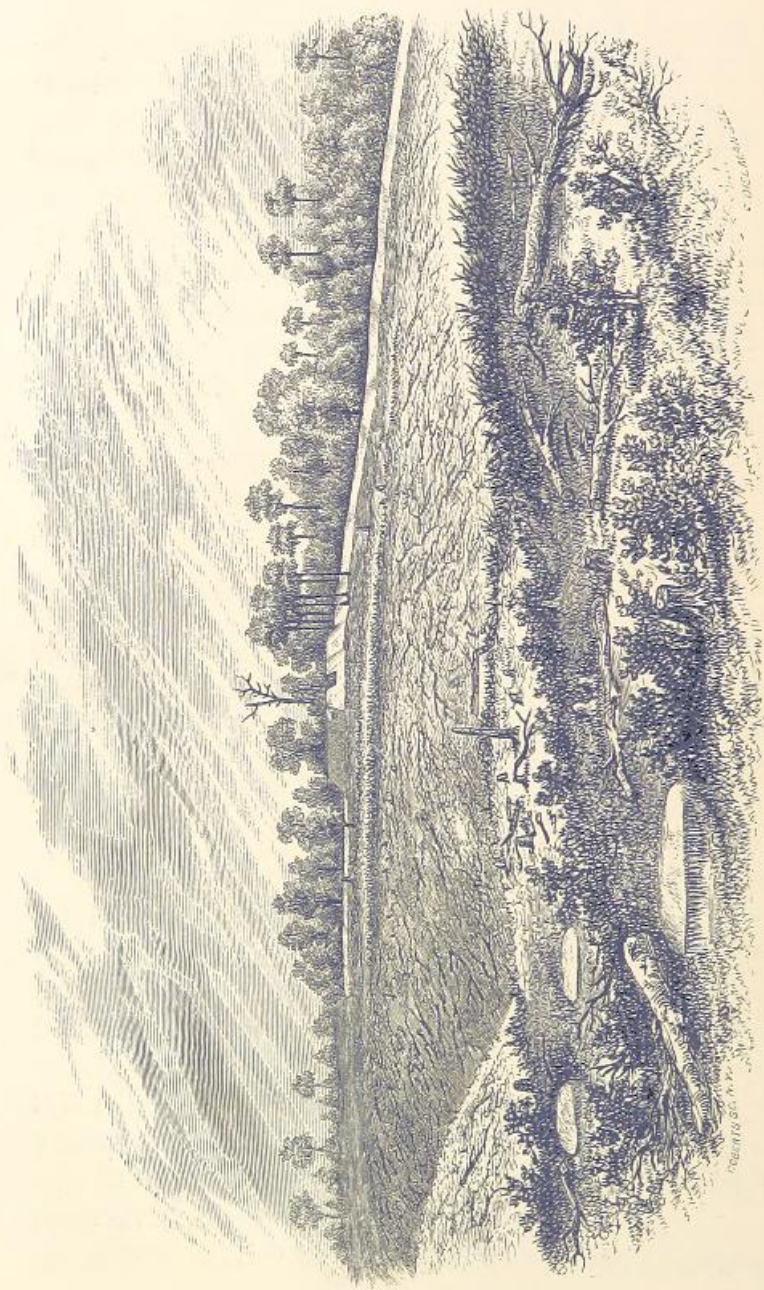
At nine, P. M., Dennis' brigade, of Veatch's division, moved to the front and occupied the ground between the Second division and the Pensacola road connecting with Garrard's right.

In the morning, Garrard's division advanced its skirmishers still farther to the front. In Gilbert's brigade the skirmish line was commanded by Maj. H. S. Bailey, Sixth Minnesota, and in the movement two were killed and several wounded. Maj. Bailey had a rib fractured by a piece of shell. Lieut. Gresham of the Sixth Minnesota was slightly wounded. In Harris' brigade the Fifty-second Indiana and Fifty-eighth Illinois were on the front line, also one company of the Eleventh Wisconsin as sharpshooters. Two deserters from the confederates came in and were taken by Lieut. Leonard, adjutant of the Fifty-second Indiana, to the brigade commander. They related that Blakely was garrisoned by three thousand five hundred men, and that labor was still being done on the works.

In course of the day, Gen. Steele's chief of staff, Lieut.-Col.







BLAKELY—VIEW FROM CENTRE OF SECOND DIVISION—SHOWING CONFEDERATE REDOUBT NO. 4.

Whittlesey, was on the front line, making observations, and coming to where the Fifty-second Indiana was posted, he advanced fifty yards in front of the skirmish line to an old log building, which had been used as a barrack, and climbed upon the rafters to get a good view. Being seen by the enemy, their artillery soon opened on him, and shells exploded above and around him, and through the house beneath, yet he continued to write in his note-book as if nothing was happening, till he had finished his observations, and then descended and left.

Lidell reported his loss on the 4th, two killed and twelve wounded.

*April 5—Fourth Day.*—At the break of day, just as soon as the confederate works could be seen, Lieut. Gray opened with the ten-pounder of the Second Connecticut, from the Stockton road, firing obliquely at the work immediately south of that road, which indeed was the most prominent point of resistance, on the confederate line. Thirty rounds were fired before there was any reply, then the response was warm. Lieut. Gray continued at intervals to fire during the day and battered down one of the embrasures of the assailed redoubt. Six confederate guns were brought to bear on his snug battery, and the explosions around it were frequent and close, but hurt not a man. At night the damage to the work was repaired.

Separate batteries for two more of Hotchkiss' guns were being built on the left of the Stockton road, and farther to the front than Lieut. Gray's. At night a battery was commenced near the right of Moore's brigade, for the Fifteenth Massachusetts.

In the evening the skirmish line of Spiceley's brigade advanced one hundred and fifty yards, and intrenched within eighty yards of the confederate rifle-pits, which had a distinct line of abatis for cover. In front of Moore's brigade the skirmishers were forty yards in advance of the line gained the previous evening, making their way as best they could through the



network of pine logs, and being within one hundred and sixty yards of the well-fortified confederate sharpshooters.

Both brigades now had two well-built lines of intrenchment with safe approaches. The men were advancing steadily and sure, and casualties, though generally fatal, were not numerous. The whole loss in the Second division during the day was three killed and one wounded; namely, killed; Sergeant S. G. Harter, Sixty-ninth Indiana, Privates C. Grove and W. L. Johnson, Twenty-fourth Indiana; wounded, Thos. McGovern, One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio.

In Hawkins' division, on the right, there was an apprehension at night of a sortie, and at nine, P. M., the Third brigade (Lieut.-Col. Kinsey commanding) of Veatch's division, marched out in rear of Hawkins as a reinforcement.

In Veatch's front, the Eighth Illinois was on the skirmish-line, and had one man wounded. At nine, P. M., it was relieved by the Forty-sixth Illinois, Col. Dornblaser commanding, who sent out two full companies as skirmishers. The right of the line was then advanced twenty-five yards, to connect with the left of the Second division, and the left was carried forward one hundred yards, meeting with little opposition.

In Garrard's division, on the left, some advance was made in front of Harris' brigade. The Thirty-fourth New Jersey was on the skirmish-line; but the left of that line was occupied by Company E, Eleventh Wisconsin, under command of Lieut. McDonald. During the night, the latter officer, with a few men, moved forward, across a ravine covered with slashings, to open ground, and intrenched a short distance from the confederate rifle-pits, and held his position successfully against warm resistance.

In the afternoon, the position of Rinaker's brigade of Garrard's division was changed from the right to the left, but the camps were not moved till the succeeding day. At five, P. M.



Maj. Winter, of the Eighty-ninth Indiana, with five hundred men of that brigade, moved down to the left through the woods, to complete the investment of Blakely, connecting with the left of Harris' brigade, and extending as near the river as practicable. On that part of the ground the woods extended to within four hundred yards of the right of the confederate works, and to a stream running parallel with them, and the banks of which were thickly wooded. About opposite the eighth redoubt of the confederates, that stream assumes the character of a swamp, widening as it approaches the river. It is thickly covered with trees, and the water is a foot deep. At sunset, Maj. Winter deployed one hundred men, six paces apart, and holding four hundred as reserve, moved to the front. His left passed over a small field, and then the line began to descend a hill-side, and was soon struggling across the stream and swampy ground. They were then greeted by one or two volleys from the brow of the high ground, two hundred yards in front of them. They pressed on, and emerging from the woods and tangled underbrush, came out where the trees had been felled, and began to ascend the rise of ground, and reaching the brow, the men on his left were within two hundred yards of the garrison's main works. Maj. Winter observed that his right did not connect with the skirmish line of Harris' brigade, but that he was considerably to the left and in advance of it, and being also in some danger from the fire of that line, he sent Capt. Hubbard, of the One Hundred and Nineteenth Illinois, to notify its commander of his position. Maj. Winter had now gained a most important position, it being considerably nearer to the garrison works than any other part of the besiegers' line. It was, of course, too good a position to expect to hold with ease. A fire of artillery and musketry was opened on him, and, unfortunately, he ordered a retreat. He withdrew his line over the stream, and commenced fortifying several hundred yards to the rear.

When Capt. Hubbard returned, he was surprised to find only the first sergeant and seventeen men of his own company, who had halted at the edge of the stream to wait for him. He thought a key position had been given up. Then posting his few men as securely as possible behind logs, he went to find the reserve; and, after some persuasion, got permission to have Capt. Chubb's company, of the Eighty-ninth Indiana, go to the front and join his left. Maj. Winter, at the same time, advanced his reserve, and intrenched on the high ground in rear of the stream, near where an old road passes which leads into Blakely. The companies of Capts. Chubb and Hubbard took position north of that road. It was about eleven o'clock when Lient. McDonald of the Eleventh Wisconsin made the advance before mentioned, and joined their right. Soon after, Capt. Hubbard brought forward a company of reserves with shovels, and, sending his own men a little in advance, commenced digging rifle-pits.

Lucas, with his cavalry, marched to occupy Clairborne, on the Alabama. During the day the besiegers heard of the fall of Selma.

The loss in the *garrison*, on the 5th, was reported to be one killed and twelve wounded. Lidell sent to Spanish fort for sharpshooters armed with the Whitworth rifles,<sup>1</sup> and reported that he had men killed and wounded at the Blakely wharf by

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "April 5. . . . The enemy have erected a battery on my left—have fired occasionally from it. Quite heavy skirmishing in my front."

*Lidell to Gibson*: "April 5.—I am much in need of sharpshooters. Send me the Whitworth riflemen, or half of them, if you cannot spare all. The enemy are very near you, and here they are at some distance, but with their sharpshooters kill and wound men at the Blakely wharf. I will send you five other men."

*Gen. Lidell to Maj. Myers, Ord. Officer*: "April 5.—I wish two hundred feet of three-inch rope to parbuckle a large gun in position, and have it on hand whenever it may be needed."

the besiegers' sharpshooters. On account of limited supply of ammunition he directed the firing to be restricted to a few picked skirmishers. He also sent for fireballs to light up his front, and enable him to use his artillery with more effect in the night.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Myers*: "April 5.—Have made for me as soon as possible some fireballs for twenty-four-pounder cohorn mortars. The enemy are trying to advance their lines during the night, and I want to light up the front of our works, in order to see their positions, and allow the artillery to be used with effect."



## CHAPTER XXII.

### SIEGE OF BLAKELY—FIFTH, SIXTH, AND SEVENTH DAYS.

*April 6—The Fifth Day.*—At three o'clock on the morning of the 6th, the garrison made a sortie from opposite their fourth redoubt down to their right, advancing a line with much noise and shouting, for the purpose, as it appeared, of dislodging the besiegers' skirmishers. No ground, however, was lost by the besiegers, yet a noisy combat of musketry ensued, lasting for an hour; and above all the turmoil roared the garrison's artillery. On the extreme left of the besiegers, where were Capt. Chubb's company of the Eighty-ninth Indiana, Capt. Hubbard's of the One Hundred and Nineteenth Illinois, and Lieut. McDonald's of the Eleventh Wisconsin, the charging party came up within a few feet of the newly-dug pits, but finding them resolutely occupied had to give way. Lieut. McDonald had with him Sergeant Moore and about a dozen men. Being hard pressed, he undertook to awe his assailants by a stratagem, and called out "First and Second brigade supports, forward!" which had a good effect.

In front of Moore's brigade of the Second division, the attack appeared to be mainly against the working party on the battery which was being made for the Fifteenth Massachusetts. The atmosphere being thick and heavy, the sound of the musketry seemed closer than usual. The darkness was also complete, and, it being known how tired and worn the men were, there was some uneasiness felt at the division headquarters lest some part of the line had been forced back. Lieut. Pettibone, aide-

de-camp, hastened down to the front line alone, and brought back the pleasing intelligence that everything was right.

In Garrard's division, a position about three hundred yards farther in advance was gained in front of Gilbert's and Harris' brigades. The advance was made at midnight. In front of Harris' brigade, the force consisted of Companies A, C, and H, from the Eleventh Wisconsin, under Capt. Lang, and the One Hundred and Seventy-eighth New York, and was commanded by Lieut.-Col. J. B. Gondalfo, of the latter regiment. In front of Gilbert's brigade, it consisted of companies from the Tenth Kansas and Thirty-second Iowa, and was commanded by Major Hutchinson, of the Thirty-second. Each man was provided with a spade, and, at the given signal, the line advanced in good shape, though opposed by a sharp fire. Some two hundred and fifty yards were gained by Lieut.-Col. Gondalfo, which brought him about six hundred yards from the garrison's main works. The loss in his line was one killed and four wounded. Major Hutchinson was ordered to advance three hundred yards, which would bring his line also six hundred yards from the main works of the garrison. He performed the duty in a truly soldierlike manner. His men being deployed and in line, he placed himself on their right, and, moving forward with them, caused them to dress on him, he at the same time counting the paces as he marched along, and going till he had got the full and required distance. His course lay near the Pensacola and Blakely road. Having gained the required distance, the whole line commenced a rifle-pit.

On the left of Harris' front, Company F, Lieut. McConnell, of the Eleventh Wisconsin, was posted on the opposite side of a ravine; and being isolated from the line on his right, Company H, of the Eleventh, was sent to his support, and Company G, of the same regiment, was also sent to fill up the gap between him and the companies on his right. The balance of the

Eleventh was held in reserve occupying the trenches vacated by the skirmish-line.

Work was also being done in Garrard's division, for a battery for the Seventeenth Ohio.

All along the line of the besiegers, the work of opening or widening trenches and approaches was progressing with vigor.

In the Second division, front, two additional separate batteries being finished for the ten-pounder rifles of the Second Connecticut, two more guns of that battery opened at daylight, one being under command of Lieut. Whitney, the other under Lieut. Hanley. Both these guns as well as the one under Lieut. Gray, were served with effect. In the morning Corporal Beecher with one of the guns last in position, fired at the colors in the Stockton road redoubt (No. 4), and caused the speedy removal of a couple of tents.

The loss in the Second Division was only four wounded.

The artillery firing by the garrison during the forenoon was fierce. Gen. Lidell reported that there was constant firing during the night, and that he had several men wounded in the night by stray shots.<sup>1</sup> He asked for a company of sappers and miners. He also expected the besiegers would open the next morning with artillery from five different positions.<sup>2</sup> At eleven, P. M., he requested the captain of the *Morgan* to send two small boats under charge of a commissioned officer to picket the mouth of the bayou, just below his right flank, and the lower mouth of the bayou, near Bay Minette.

*April 7—Sixth Day.*—Just before daylight the garrison

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Col. Garner, Chief of Staff:* "Blakely, April 6.—Enemy at this place keeps up a constant firing throughout the night with skirmishers, and is busily engaged erecting his batteries. Several men wounded during the night by stray shots."

<sup>2</sup> *Lidell to Maury:* "April 6, 7:40 P. M. . . . . It is very probable the enemy will open upon us early in the morning from five different positions."



made another sortie against the advance line of the troops of the Thirteenth and Sixteenth corps. They came out apparently in strong force, delivering repeated volleys and charging with cheers up to the pits of the federals. The artillery also performed its part, and for two miles along the line the tumult of the roar of musketry and cannonading was startling. At such an hour was felt how much depended on the steadfast soldier-ship and activity of a few men at the front. The confederates were repulsed, and it was reported with unusual loss.<sup>1</sup> The loss in the Tenth Kansas was one killed. In the Fifty-second Indiana, two wounded. The five companies of the latter regiment expended during the night about seven thousand rounds of cartridges and the firing was probably in the same proportion on other parts of the line. In front of Rinaker's brigade, Lieut. Col. Taylor, of the One Hundred and Nineteenth Illinois, was in command of the skirmish-line and advanced the left of it across the stream and swamp and had some pits dug.

During the afternoon of the 7th and the succeeding evening, rain fell; the air was chilly, and duty in the muddy trenches was uncomfortable.

Veatch's front was occupied by Dennis' brigade. The Twenty-third Wisconsin was engaged in making a battery in Hawkins' front, and lost one man killed and four wounded.

On the right of Hawkins, at the edge of the bluff, a fine battery was being constructed for five thirty-pounder Parrotts, under the direction of Capt. Newton, assistant-engineer, to drive off the gunboats. Large details from the Colored division were constantly at work on it, yet many of the gabions and fascines were being made by details from Veatch's division. Working parties on the battery were concealed from the gunboats by the large forest-trees along the brow of the bluff.

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<sup>1</sup> A report, afterward captured, of Col. Laws, Second Alabama reserves, showed that his loss was fifteen killed and twenty-two wounded.

The night attack had interfered with the labor on the battery for the twelve-pounder Napoleons of the Fifteenth Massachusetts on the left centre of the Second division, and it was not entirely finished at daylight of the 7th. Lieut. Rowse commanding the battery, however, had four guns in position and at that time opened fire. The redoubt opposite him was only five hundred yards distant and had two light steel rifled guns and a twelve-pounder howitzer, while eleven hundred yards obliquely to his left was a thirty-pounder Parrott; and there were several other guns in his front. The confederates returned an accurate and severe fire, filling up the embrasures and silencing the Fifteenth in a short time. The gunners of the Fifteenth Massachusetts clung to their work with gallantry. Corporals Clark, Essex, and Gove, were mentioned for good behavior. Private George R. Cooney jumped up into the embrasure to clear out the obstructions and was seriously wounded. Two others were wounded. None of the guns, however, were injured. Work continued on the battery the ensuing night.

The three ten-pounders of the Second Connecticut continued to do good service and remained uninjured.

In Moore's brigade of the Second division, the third parallel was widened to from six to eight feet, and from its left an approach was being carried forward by the Thirty-seventh Illinois, under the personal direction of its commanding officer, Col. Black, and was then thirty yards to the front.

In Spiceley's brigade, the third parallel was opened one hundred and fifty yards from the left, along a crest, connecting with an approach which had been finished the preceding day. This third line was only about five hundred yards from the confederate works, and was subject to dangerous fire from sharpshooters strongly posted on the brow of a ravine, off to the left. Only one man worked in the trench at a time. Lieut.-Col. Vifquain and Capt. Howard, of the Ninety-seventh Illinois,



having been specially detailed, were superintending the construction of the rifle-pits and approaches in that brigade.

The loss in the division was five wounded.

*Operations of the Cavalry.*—Gen. Steele having directed Lieut.-Col. Spurling to break up a party of confederates who were hovering in the rear, the latter started out in the morning on that enterprise, with twenty picked men. They disguised themselves in confederate uniform, and the neighboring citizens, supposing them to be confederates, informed Spurling that Capt. Dupree and Lieut. Fitzgerald, with twelve men, would be at a certain house at one o'clock, P. M., for the purpose of capturing some "Yankees" who were in the habit of visiting there. Spurling then moved on, and met the party near the house in question, attacked them, killed one and wounded one, and captured the captain, lieutenant, and seven men.

In the garrison, three siege guns were put in position. The VII-inch guns were waiting for platforms. New skirmish-pits were made at night. The commander reported that he had not men enough to occupy the whole line, and asked that a hundred negroes might be sent him for fatigue duty.<sup>1</sup>

The garrison was notified that at eight o'clock on the following morning their artillery would open at all points against the besiegers, and the skirmishers were enjoined to take all possible advantage in their firing.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "April 7.—Three siege guns are in position and will be ready for use to-morrow morning. The heavy guns will be delayed, for want of platforms and all necessary appliances. Have not sufficient men to occupy the whole line; hence the labor of digging, and duty in skirmish pits, is very hard upon the men. If you could spare me a hundred negroes for a few nights, I could get all the approaches and traverses constructed promptly and save the men. It is better to use them than to lose them."

<sup>2</sup> *Capt. Lewis (A. A. G.), to Gens. Cockrell and Thomas*: "April 7.—Gen. Lidell directs me to inform you, that at eight, A. M., to-morrow, our artillery will open upon the enemy at all points along our lines; and he directs that



Between the skirmishers of Garrard's division, of the Sixteenth corps, and of Thomas' Alabama reserves, a system of intercourse had grown up, which the garrison commander justly condemned. The men on the skirmish line made truces of some hours' length, during which they would meet and converse in a friendly manner, often discussing public questions relating to the war. They would also exchange newspapers, and trade coffee and sugar for tobacco. They agreed also that there should be no firing while the skirmish-line was being relieved. Then when they resumed their places, it would sometimes happen that one or the other would call out to warn his adversary that he was about to fire. The garrison commander learned that the Sixteenth corps men were "very bold," and that they exposed themselves "without being fired upon with sufficient effect to make them timid." To abate the mischief, he directed Gen. Thomas, commanding the reserves, to send a company to report to Gen. Cockrell, to exchange for a company of his command, and that the old soldiers of Cockrell's division should be scattered in the skirmish pits with Thomas' men.<sup>1</sup>

*April 8—Seventh Day of the Siege.*—At one o'clock the morning of the 8th, the garrison, with their usual enterprise advanced a strong skirmish-line, covered by the fire of artillery, against Veatch's front, and the right of the Second division,

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you order your skirmishers to take all advantage possible of firing upon the enemy's skirmishers and artillerists, when the salvo is made."

<sup>1</sup> *Capt. Butler (A. A. A. G.), to Gen. Thomas* : "April 7.—Gen. Lidell directs me to say, that he did not recollect the reported capture of the second pit. He has been informed that the enemy in your front is very bold, and that his men expose themselves without being fired upon with sufficient effect to make them timid. He wishes you to caution your skirmishers to use their utmost vigilance in preventing the encroachments of the enemy, and directs that you send one company to report to Gen. Cockrell, to exchange for a company of his command, and he wishes you to scatter these old soldiers about in the skirmish pits with your men along the front where the enemy is now attacking."

using, in front of the latter a blue light for a signal. The movement was repulsed successfully; but an alarm was caused all along the line, and for an hour the firing was heavy, especially in front of the Colored division. Gen. Osterhaus, chief of staff, rode up from Spanish fort, to ascertain what was going on; and Gen. Canby telegraphed to Steele for the same object. The latter replied that nothing unusual was occurring.

In Veatch's front the Ninety-ninth Illinois had three men wounded in the affair, and there were slight casualties on other parts of the line.

On Garrard's left, where the One Hundred and Nineteenth Illinois was on duty at the front, the first line of rifle-pits beyond the stream having been made a few yards back from the brow of the hill, a new line of pits was made some sixty or seventy yards in advance. In the night the skirmishers moved into the new trench to give it a trial, and having fired a few shots to draw the fire of the confederates and then giving them a volley aimed at the blaze of their muskets, the One Hundred and Nineteenth men raised a yell as if intending to charge. They heard the fire taken up all along the line, the artillery firing on both sides, and also the confederate gun-boats; and they thought their volley and shouts caused all the tumult.

At eight in the forenoon, the garrison opened with all their artillery, and fired with uncommon vehemence for an hour. The shells frequently struck the parapets of the besiegers' rifle-pits and exploded over them. There were many narrow escapes, but few casualties. Their fire was replied to in Garrard's front by the Seventeenth Ohio light battery; and in Hawkins' front by two guns of the Second Massachusetts, under Lieut. Swan. The battery for the Fifteenth Massachusetts was in such condition that four of its guns could be served in it with safety, and they renewed their fire with effect. The three guns of the Second



Connecticut were also engaged. In course of the day the one on the left, and farthest to the front, was disabled by its own recoil.

When the engagement was hottest, Col. Matthews, of the Ninety-ninth Illinois, in Veatch's front, saw a confederate flag inside the garrison in his immediate front, and he at once caused his regimental colors to be planted on the parapet of the works he occupied. This induced a livelier fire, and once his colors were knocked down by a shot, which, at the same time, completely covered three of his men with earth.

Many of the shots, aimed at the Fifteenth Massachusetts battery, passed over and struck about the camp of Moore's brigade, and would have done much injury if the men had not been well protected by their earthworks. A shell passed close to Lieut.-Col. Baldwin, of the Eighty-third Ohio, and tore down a part of his quarters.

Work in advancing the trenches was steadily progressing on all parts of the besiegers' front. On the extreme left, Maj. Chapman, of the One Hundred and Twenty-second Illinois, was in command of the skirmish-line, and caused new pits to be dug farther to the left and to the front. At one point, his men occupied a position within fifteen yards of a rifle-pit of the confederates.

During the day, orders were received by the Second division to be in readiness to march with five days' rations in the haversack and fifteen in wagons. This was most unwelcome to all of the division, for work on trenches and approaches had been going on with enthusiasm day and night, and it was felt that whatever was in their front must soon yield. The prospect of losing the results of their toil might well have dampened their ardor; but it did not. The crack of the sharpshooter's rifle did not abate, and the spade was none the less nimbly handled.

A similar order was sent to Carr's division, of the Sixteenth corps, then on the eve of its victorious assault on Spanish fort.



But the necessity for the movement did not occur, and neither division marched. The order was occasioned by a false alarm of confederate troops gathering in considerable force above Stockton.

*Combat with the Gunboats.*—At ten o'clock, there was rain. At twelve o'clock, three thirty-pounder Parrotts, of Capt. Wimmer's battery (H, First Indiana heavy artillery), were in position in the battery on Hawkins' right; and, at two o'clock, the trees having first been cut down to give a suitable range, fire was opened on the gunboats, lying a mile distant, in the Tensas.

These steamers consisted of the Morgan, built of wood and carrying eight guns; the Nashville, clad with six inches of iron before, and with iron round the pilot-house, carrying five large guns and a howitzer; and the Huntsville, a turtle-backed iron-clad, carrying four VIII-inch guns. The heavy projectiles from these boats had annoyed the besiegers every day, striking quite close to the different headquarters; but had inflicted the principal injury on the colored troops, who now raised a glad shout as they heard the first booming from the assailing battery.

Expectation was at a high pitch. Drew, Whittlesey, and several other officers, were present to watch the effect of the firing, for the guns and gunners were in good repute. The thirty-pounders of the First Indiana were loaded with percussion shells, and the first shot struck the Morgan in her middle. That blow was the first warning the gunboats had of the existence of the battery; and it was a few minutes before a reply was made. In the meantime, Capt. Wimmer maintained an accurate and splendid fire. Then the Morgan and Nashville opened on the battery and fired with accuracy, exploding their shells against its ample and well-beaten parapets. Yet so elaborately and thoroughly had the work been made that it seemed impervious. The only casualties were two men wound-

ed by earth thrown by a shell. The firing became intense and the effect was grand. It was not long till the Morgan and Nashville in a disabled condition steamed off out of range. Then Wimmer turned his guns with solid shot on the Huntsville, and as soon as it was dark she also made her escape.

*The Garrison.*—A detail of colored men was sent to cut the timber on the right of the Ninth redoubt, and a strong picket force kept in their front. The confederate artillery endeavored, but without success, to silence the Seventeenth Ohio battery.<sup>1</sup> The commander of the garrison reported that his batteries were briskly replied to at eight, A. M., from several points. At nine, P. M., fireballs were thrown from redoubts 1 and 4 to assist their pickets.<sup>2</sup> Toward night the troops on both sides remarked the awful cannonading at Spanish fort, and at ten the besiegers heard of the assault there and that a lodgment had been effected.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "April 8, 8:45, A. M.—Enemy kept up a brisk fire about half-past two, A. M., from their lines in front of 5, 6, 7, for about one and a half hours. At eight, A. M., our batteries commenced opening upon them, which, up to this, have been briskly replied to from several points, and one immediately in front of No. 7, throwing shells into Blakely and at the Brickyard landing. We are not yet able to silence this battery."

<sup>2</sup> *Capt. Lewis to Gens. Cockrell and Thomas*: "April 8.—Gen. Lidell directs me to inform you that, at nine, P. M., fireballs will be thrown from redoubts 1 and 4, and desires you to have your pickets relieved before that time, and let them be informed of the above, so that they will be able to take every possible advantage of the enemy, and increase the effectiveness of their fire."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### SIEGE OF BLAKELY—EIGHTH AND LAST DAY OF THE SIEGE.

THE morning of Sunday, the 9th of April, was calm, for the skirmish line was unusually quiet. At nine o'clock there was a shower of rain. Afterward the sun came out bright and warm, but toward evening dark clouds rolled up from the west.

The fall of Spanish fort enabled Gen. Canby to send more artillery to Blakely, and, in course of the day, six or eight more guns opened on the side of the besiegers, but were faintly answered.

The Fourth Massachusetts light battery, Capt. Trull commanding, arrived from Spanish fort, and opened with two guns from a battery in Scofield's brigade front, of Hawkins' division; and on the extreme right, two of the thirty-pounders of the First Indiana were turned on the garrison and fired over thick timber. These, with the two light guns of the Second Massachusetts, in Pile's brigade front, made six guns engaged in Hawkins' front the last day of the siege, and they did good execution. Some of the men in Scofield's brigade were injured by shells from a mortar in the garrison. When the thirty-pounder shells from the First Indiana guns were screeching over the heads of the colored troops, they cried, "Another through train to Mobile."

In the Second division front two ten-pounders of the Second Connecticut, and four twelve-pounders of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, fired at intervals through the day and with much



spirit, the latter sending some of their shots against the garrison's left.

In Veatch's front two twelve-pounders of the Seventh Massachusetts, Capt. Storer, were in position and engaged, in an unfinished battery.

But the largest proportion of the artillery the last day was in Garrard's front. Capt. Mack left Spanish fort at four, A. M., with his eighteen-pounders, and at nine, A. M., reported to Gen. Steele. The battery went into camp for a while, and at five, P. M., took position nine hundred yards from the garrison works, behind a trench on Gen. Garrard's right. On his left, and considerably to the rear, were four thirty-pounder Parrotts, of Cox's and Hendrick's batteries, of the First Indiana, which had come up from Spanish fort. Along his second line of intrenchments near his right were four ten-pounder Parrotts, of Capt. Lowell's Second Illinois, and three of Capt. Rice's Seventeenth Ohio Napoleons. Late in the afternoon, four ten-pounder Parrotts, of Ginn's Third Indiana, took position farther to the left on open ground masked by timber.

The besiegers now had three lines of intrenchments or continuous rifle-pits with approaches, the Third being within about six hundred yards of the garrison's main works, and some portions of the line were nearer. The skirmishers on Garrard's left were within three hundred yards of it, the ground there affording cover up to about that distance. On the right of Moore's brigade, of the Second division, an approach had been opened a hundred yards out from the advance parallel and within four hundred yards of the main works of the garrison, and skirmishers were posted within one hundred and forty yards of the principal line of confederate rifle-pits. On Spiceley's left, of the same division, the parallel was within about five hundred yards of the garrison's main works, but withdrew as it extended to the right, so that from the point where it crossed

SKETCH OF

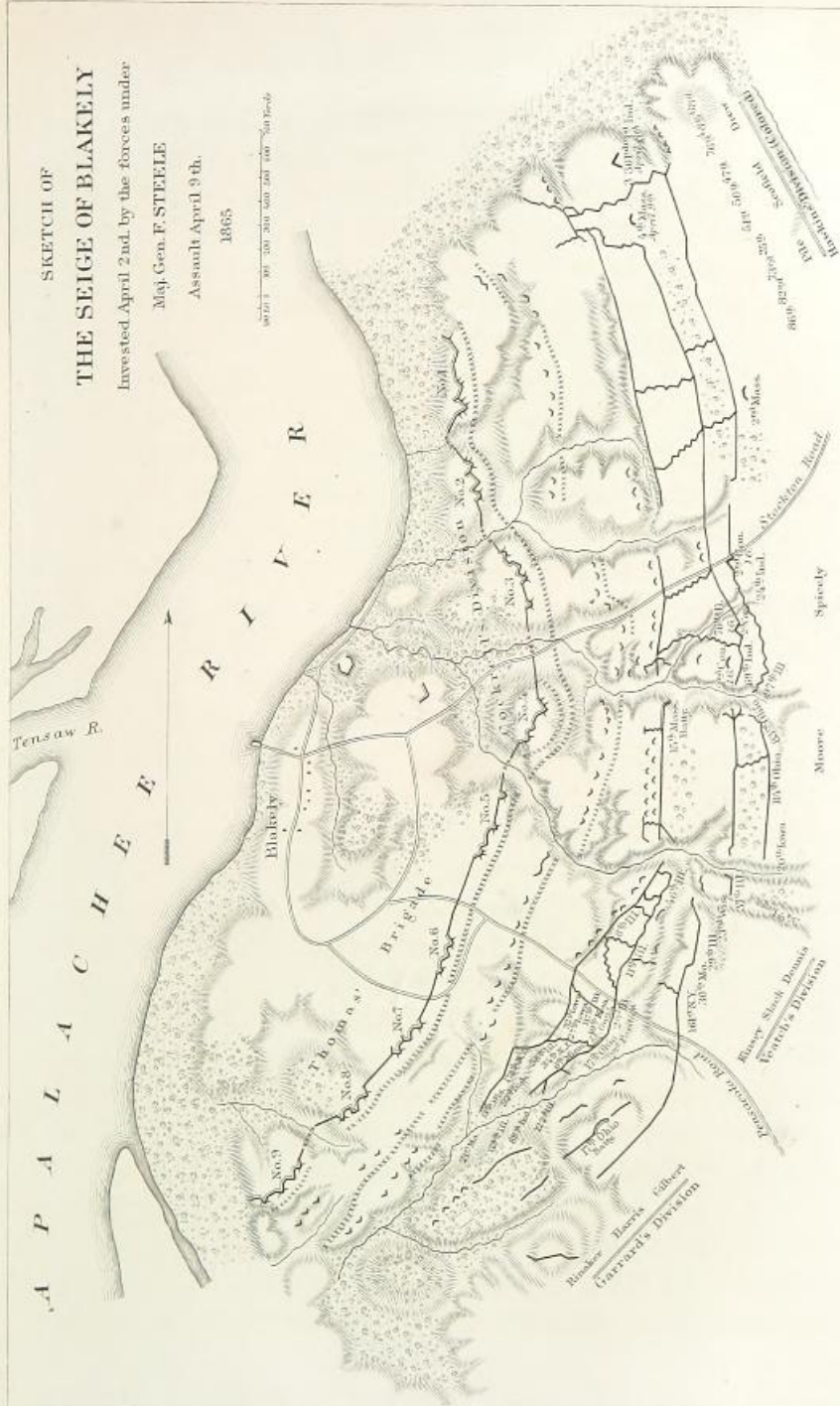
# THE SIEGE OF BLAKELY

Invested April 2nd, by the forces under

Major Gen. F. STEELE


Assault April 9th.

1865







the Stockton road the advance trench was five hundred and eighty yards from the main works in front; but there were detached pits forty yards farther in advance. There was a safe approach to the left part of that trench; and the soldiers with characteristic humor had put up in it a sort of guide-board with the inscription " To Blakely." Another approach was being started thence to the front. An approach was also commenced to it from the right wing of the Twenty-fourth Indiana. In digging that advance trench two torpedoes had been excavated; and others in Spicoley's front had been exploded by stray musket-balls.

In Hawkins' division Pile's skirmish-line had been advanced, during the night of the 8th, one hundred and forty yards, and rifle-pits dug in the new position. On the right of Scofield's brigade an approach was extended within two hundred and forty yards of the principal line of confederate rifle-pits.

Each division commander had daily reported to Steele the progress of the works, and the casualties.

Up to this time the casualties had been: in the Colored division, sixteen killed, and one hundred and seventy-six wounded; in each of the other divisions the loss had been about four or five killed, and from twenty to thirty wounded.

In the forenoon, some boats had been seen from the tree-observatory in rear of the besiegers, to put out from Blakely loaded with troops. A report soon afterward flew through the trenches that the garrison was evacuating; and this seemed to be confirmed by the unusual silence of both their artillery and sharpshooters. There was, therefore, a general desire all along the line to take the first opportunity to move forward to "feel the enemy."

Garrard received instructions, in the forenoon, from his corps commander, to assault the works in his front in the afternoon; and was informed that the other two divisions of the corps

would be up to reinforce him, and that he should have all the artillery he wanted.

Then, about three in the afternoon, Garrard had a consultation with his brigade commanders, at his own headquarters, Gen. Veatch also being present, and fixed upon half-past five o'clock, P. M., for an assault to be made in his front.

Notice of the intended assault was immediately sent to the troops of that division by the respective brigade commanders.

About three o'clock, Lieut. Pettibone, aide-de-camp, was sent from the headquarters of the Second division to obtain permission from Gen. Steele for that division to move on the garrison works, "as far as it could go."

Gen. Steele was, at the same time, actively engaged making arrangements for an advance, and was found in the saddle by the aide-de-camp, who returned, saying Gen. Steele desired the movement to be made, and fixed the time for it at half-past five, P. M. Then, not knowing that the movement was to be general, the same staff officer was sent to give notice to Gen. Hawkins of the proposed advance, that there might be concert of action. He returned with the information that Canby and Steele were both at Hawkins' headquarters, and that a general advance would be made at half-past five, P. M.

Gen. Veatch received official notice at five, P. M., through Capt. Lacy, of Gen. Steele's staff, that a general advance would be made at half-past five, P. M.; and he was directed to "enter the enemy's works, if possible."

*The Garrison.*—All this while the besiegers were much deceived, in supposing that any part of the garrison had evacuated. The troops who had been seen to leave on steamers were a portion of the jaded force that, through mud and water, had made their way from Spanish fort; and not all of them had left Blakely.

Meantime, the garrison commander was informed, by signal







BLAKELY—VIEW IN FRONT OF HAWKINS' DIVISION.

telegraph from Battery Tracy, that the federal forces were moving from Spanish fort up to Blakely. As soon as he heard this he apprehended that the besiegers, with such reinforcements, would be pretty certain to assault; and he sent out the intelligence to the division and separate artillery commanders, with instructions for them to hold their commands "in readiness for an assault at any moment."<sup>1</sup> A copy of the order was captured, containing the endorsements of some officers, expressive of their ardent determination to hold their position at all hazards—which, undoubtedly, was the universal sentiment of the garrison.

They had suffered a severe artillery fire during the forenoon, having two guns dismounted, but their artillery were saving their ammunition to repel an assault, and abstained from replying.<sup>2</sup>

*Preliminary Advance by the Colored Troops.*—Previous to the general assault which took place at about six o'clock, there was an advance and spirited combat in front of the Colored division.

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<sup>1</sup> *Capt. Lewis to Gen. Cockrell and others*: "April 9.—Gen. Lidell directs me to inform you, that Col. Patton signals the following from Battery 'Tracy': 'Wagon trains and heavy columns of infantry have been crossing Bay Minette bridge all the morning.'

"In view of the above, Gen. Lidell directs that you hold your command in readiness for an assault at any moment."

<sup>2</sup> *Lidell to Maury*: "April 9. . . . . We have had the constant fire of five batteries on us this morning, dismounting two guns, field pieces, including the only Blakely gun. Col. Patton has signalled Capt. Grayson (3:20 p. m.), that artillery accompanies the infantry. There is nearly one quarter of a mile, from the right of Gen. Thomas, through the swamp, and to the river, that is unoccupied by any troops; and the track of the garrison from Spanish fort discloses to an enemy the means of approach to this place, on that side. I shall move my quarters to that locality, and make every disposition available. I am having the new place of landing prepared for the use of boats, small craft, and, possibly, steamboats."



In Gen. Pile's brigade, which was the left one of the Colored division, the Seventy-third regiment, Lieut.-Col. Merriam, and the Eighty-sixth, Major Mudgett, were in the advance trench. A little after noon, Gen. Pile received word from each of those officers, that the confederate sharpshooters in their front had suddenly become quiet, and they asked permission to "feel the enemy." Pile then ordered one commissioned officer, and thirty select men from each regiment to be in readiness to advance. He also caused the two guns of the Fourth Massachusetts light artillery to fire a few shots, to see what reply would be elicited. No reply was made. He, then, at about three o'clock, was starting to the front to advance, when Maj.-Gen. Osterhaus, chief of staff, rode up, dismounted, and went forward with him. After examining the ground, Gen. Osterhaus, directed that half the men selected for the movement should get into a ravine immediately in front of the right regiment, then move up to a crest held by the skirmish-line. At a given signal they, with the remainder of the party who were to spring out of the rifle-pits on the left, were to charge and, if possible, capture the confederate rifle-pits. This was undertaken in a resolute manner, Capt. Jenkins of the Eighty-sixth, and Capt. Brown, of the Seventy-third, assisted by the skirmish-line under Capt. Greenwood of the Eighty-sixth, leading the movement. A galling fire was immediately opened on them, both from the sharpshooters and artillery. They then grew more cautious and sought as they advanced what protection there was from stumps and logs. These, however, afforded but little cover; and to advance at all they had to jump over fallen trees and logs, and were consequently much exposed. The ground was exceedingly rough, and they had three hundred yards to go. The garrison sharpshooters had a strong line of abatis in their front, and felt cool and confident. They took advantage of the exposure of the assaulting party and shot down many. Capt.



Brown of the Seventy-third was mortally wounded. Still, officers and men kept moving forward with self possession and courage, and though fighting at disadvantage, returned the fire with spirit. Gen. Osterhaus declared that they fought as well as the best of troops.

Perceiving, by the steady advance of the party, that they meditated a serious attack, the garrison sent out reinforcements to their skirmish-line, and the contest grew more obstinate. Here and there a man of the colored troops would fall back a few yards for better shelter, for the artillery was playing on them with searching fire, but the general line held its ground and advanced rather than fell back. Pile reinforced them with five companies, with instructions to hold the ground gained and "intrench immediately in rear of the enemy's abatis." In about an hour they had advanced three hundred yards, got possession of the garrison's advanced rifle-pits, and inflicted some loss on the occupants of the latter as they fell back to their breast-works.

The skirmish-line in front of Scofield's brigade and Drew's brigade was advanced at about four o'clock, and the confederate pits were also captured in their fronts, yet not without loss. In Drew's brigade, on the extreme right, the Sixty-eighth regiment, with Lieut.-Col. Densmore in command, and the Seventy-sixth, Major Nye, were at the front. The skirmish-line being doubled for the advance, there were four companies from each of the two regiments engaged. The movement was conducted by Col. J. B. Jones, of the Sixty-eighth by a left wheel. The men first took off their coats so as to move more readily through the brush, and charged in their shirt-sleeves. They had three hundred yards to pass over. The skirmishers who had been on duty and were in the front first rushed out of their pits and were followed closely by the second line, all moving on the double-quick and making a deafening clamor by their cheers. By the

time they had gained a hundred yards the confederate skirmishers began to retreat from their advance pits. The assaulting party met an effective artillery and musketry fire from the garrison and lost several of their number, yet they pushed on in a dauntless manner to the confederate pits, and then in obedience to Col. Jones' orders, laid down behind the abatis. In the charge, Col. Jones was shot through his hand with a musket ball, but continued at his work.

At this time Col. Drew's reserve regiment, the Forty-eighth, Col. F. M. Crandall commanding, was in camp nearly a mile in the rear; yet Drew, being confident that the force there present could carry the main works in his front, or else, impelled by the enthusiasm of the moment, ordered the balance of the Sixty-eighth and Seventy-sixth to charge, giving the order—"Forward on the enemy's works," at the same time waving his hat. This was only a few minutes after Jones' movement was completed. He passed along the trench, loudly giving the command, for there was now a great din, and company officers and men, as fast as they heard it direct from him—for the best disciplined could hardly be expected to be formal when they heard an order to charge—broke off on the double-quick with shouts, and charged with the greatest enthusiasm. Not starting in line, both regiments soon got mingled together, and they encountered a galling fire from every gun that could be brought to bear on them. Yet the officers were using their best endeavors to keep the men in line. The fatal track of the cannon-ball, of grape, canister, and shells, was soon apparent. Lieut. Manhardt, of the Sixty-eighth, was instantly killed by a grape-shot, while endeavoring to execute an order to close the men to the right. Capt. George Giger, of the Sixty-eighth, was mortally wounded while rallying the men to close up to the left. Many of the men had fallen. Col. Jones, in passing along, felt something pulling at his trowsers, and,



looking down, a man, who was mortally wounded in the first charge, besought him to take his cartridges "to the boys." Jones himself soon after fell, stunned by the explosion of a shell.

Col. Drew, and the two regiments with him, had moved along the ground on a level with the garrison's left redoubt, and had to face a deadly fire. At length he ordered that they should pass to the right and advance on the bluff side, where they would have some cover; and in a few minutes all, except a few who continued on the high ground, were skirting the brow of the bluff, intending to reach the left of the confederate works and go in if possible. The bluff side was steep and thickly covered with slashings. The ground also was springy and soft, and it was extremely difficult for the troops to get along. While a squad of men paused to fire over the brow of the bluff, others hurried along to take an advanced position, and then the former squad again would drop down, work their way along and take a position farther to the front. A storm of missiles was still sweeping over them, and they were losing some of their number from exhaustion as well as wounds. Finally, the last depression affording any protection was reached. From there to the main parapet was smooth ground of less than a hundred steps. Then they halted to take breath and wait the arrival of those who had fallen behind, preparatory to their last effort. A few of the men pushed on some yards below the hill, but were soon either killed or driven back.

It soon seemed clear to them that they were too few for the work in hand. Their numbers were counted over and found to be nineteen officers and sixty-five men! Officers in too great proportion. What was to be done? There is reinforcement in a cheer. They cheered, fired volleys, and cheered again as if about to charge. They wondered why the reserve did not show itself, and why more of their own comrades were not up. Many



of the latter, poor fellows, would never again be up. Then they listened but in vain to hear any shots on their own side. They could see the garrison works teeming with men, and felt that they were in imminent danger of a sally. To go forward was folly, to go back was less to their notion.

Col. Drew then went back, to hasten up the reserve, and the senior officer left with the party was Lieut.-Col. Densmore, of the Sixty-eighth. They kept firing volleys at the parapet and cheering.

The garrison, suspecting the charging party were in trouble, attempted a sally, yet with diffidence. Cpts. Holcomb, Norwood, Lieut. Rogers, and some other officers, with a few men who kept on the high ground, had got some cover near the main works, but they and the party over the bluff were ignorant of each other's whereabouts. When the former saw the sally party starting, they fired on it with all their might, and Densmore's men, hearing some of the shots go over, also put in a volley, with one of their cheers. This happy concurrence repulsed the sally. But Densmore's men did not know the result, and continued to apprehend an attack; and, while awaiting with absorbing anxiety the arrival of the reserve, they continued their volleys and cheers.

Then three ominous-appearing vessels steamed out in sight, and the men, as if willing to catch at straws, exclaimed, "They are *Union* gunboats that have arrived just in season to help us!" and then they had a cheer for the "*Union* gunboats." Densmore said nothing to them of the confederate flag he saw at the mast-head. Shortly, the garrison ran a howitzer outside of their works, and threw canister into the logs and brush, which compelled the colored troops to hug closer to the ground.

After waiting some time, Lieut.-Col. Densmore had sent back a captain for the reserve. Afterward he sent a lieutenant, charging him to let nothing but death prevent his bringing

back men or orders. He began to think he would need to send a third messenger, when an officer showed himself sufficiently to get his attention. But the din of canister, bullets, and hand-grenades, prevented a word being heard. Then the officer took off his hat and beckoned the party back.

Too indignant and sullen to hurry, they retreated in order bringing back their dead as far as possible, and taking all their wounded. They returned as they went, a part halting to fire while the rest retreated to the next cover. When they had got far enough away to render it safe for the gunboats to fire without endangering the garrison, those boats opened a raking fire along the side of the bluff.

The party got back to their trenches in time to see the reserve arrive from the rear. But the little detachment with Norwood and Holcomb still remained in their position, nearly up to the garrison works.

As the movement commenced, this party had hastened forward through impediments of fallen tree-tops, in face of a sharp fire, and when within a hundred yards of the fort, a shower of musket-balls, thrown from cannon, beat around them. Out of eleven officers of the party, seven were there killed or wounded. They became apprehensive of a counter-charge, and of being flanked. If captured, they also apprehended that their rights as prisoners would not be respected. After a short consultation, they rightly concluded the best thing to be done was to fight it out. Then the men fixed bayonets, and some were heard, with clenched teeth, to say they would die sooner than surrender or retreat. With fixed bayonets this gallant party charged down the line parallel with the fort, and, after a short but desperate resistance, drove the garrison sharpshooters from the interior line of abatis into their main works, and gained a position whence they could silence the more destructive guns. Here they remained till the final assault.



## THE ASSAULT.

The skirmish-line of Gen. Pile's brigade had been intrenching in their new position, under heavy fire, about forty minutes, when the cheering of the white troops was heard on their left. An officer then ran in that direction till he could see what was taking place, and quickly returning, signalled to Gen. Pile that the Second division were charging on the main works in their front.<sup>1</sup>

Then Pile ordered forward his brigade, and the assault became general in Hawkins' entire front. The brigades of Pile, Scofield, and Drew, charged almost simultaneously, and carried the works in their respective fronts. Greater gallantry than was shown by officers and men could hardly be desired. The latter were burning with an impulse to do honor to their race, and rushed forward with intense enthusiasm, in face of a terrible fire. As they got close to the works some of the confederates, dreading to fall into their hands, ran off to surrender to the white troops. In Drew's front, several of the confederates, with muskets, remained outside of the works, refused to surrender, and maintained a cool and desperate struggle till they fell. In Scofield's line, the explosion of a single torpedo killed and wounded thirteen of the Fifty-first regiment. As his men were advancing, they heard a confederate officer behind the works exclaim, "Lay low and mow the ground—the d——d

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<sup>1</sup> "This movement on my part was followed up by the Second brigade on my right, and the work of intrenching had been progressing, under heavy fire, forty minutes, when cheering on my left notified me that Gen. Andrews' division was moving forward. Still ignorant whether this was an assault on the enemy's main works, or merely a following up of the movement already made by me, I sent a staff officer to my left to report if their advance continued beyond the first line of abatis, and parallel with my advance, who immediately signalled that Gen. Andrews' division was already advancing to assault the main works."—*Gen. Pile's Official Report.*



niggers are coming!" which became a byword in camp. The colored troops captured nine guns, twenty-two commissioned officers, and two hundred and one enlisted men. The Seventy-third colored regiment—New Orleans troops—was the first of Pile's brigade to plant its colors on the parapet; and Sergt. Edward Simon, of Company I of that regiment, was mentioned for his signal bravery.

The prisoners were generally treated with kindness. A colored soldier of the Fiftieth regiment found his former young master among the prisoners. They appeared happy to meet, and drank from the same canteen. Some of the Louisiana men, however, made an attack on the prisoners and were with difficulty restrained from injuring them. The latter almost invited attack by manifesting an unreasonable dread of the colored soldiers; huddling together in heaps, and acting as if their captors were wild beasts. Capt. Norwood and Lieut. Gleason of the Sixty-eighth were wounded, the latter mortally, in their efforts to save the prisoners.

Afterward the prisoners were taken to the camp of the Colored division, and some of them endeavored to lead the way so as to avoid torpedoes; yet one of the guards had his leg blown off by the explosion of a torpedo near Scofield's trenches, but nothing like retaliation was manifested.

Hawkins' loss in the assault was thirty-two killed and one hundred and forty-seven wounded. Of these a pretty large proportion were officers. Several of the latter have been named. Among those who fell in the assault were Maj. Mudget of the Eighty-second, and Capt. S. R. Wilson of the Seventy-sixth, acting assistant adjutant-general on Col. Drew's staff. The total loss in killed and wounded in that division before Blakely was three hundred and seventy-one—namely: killed, five commissioned officers and forty-three men; wounded, twenty-two commissioned officers and three hundred and one men. The

confederate loss in their front in killed and wounded was about a third as large.

*Second Division.*—Cols. Spiceley and Moore, brigade commanders, were at division headquarters about four o'clock, when the order of assault, or advance—for it was not then thought there would be much resistance—was agreed upon. It was arranged that a regiment, deployed as skirmishers, should advance in front of each brigade; and after it had gained the distance of one hundred and fifty yards, that the remainder of the brigades should follow, deployed in line of battle. The movement was to commence with the Second brigade, and the cheer of the skirmish-line, as it started, was to be the signal for the skirmish-line to start in front of the Third brigade. The commander of the latter brigade, Col. Moore, selected the Eighty-third Ohio as the skirmish regiment in his front, and the Ninety-seventh Illinois, at the request of its commanding officer, was designated for the skirmishers of the Second brigade.

Both brigades were in the two front trenches at about half-past five; and the first notice most of the men had of the assault was the order to fall in. Of the men in camp that Sunday afternoon, some had been writing home that they were soon to march—for they were under marching orders. Others were washing their clothes; and so from the humblest duties, they hastened to take part in the grandest.

Lieut.-Col. Vifquain had the Ninety-seventh deployed, and had passed along the trench once or twice to see that everything was in readiness, when an explosion of a torpedo occurred on the rear edge of the trench, tearing off the leg of Capt. Wisner, of the Ninety-seventh Illinois, who was endeavoring to pass to his company, and injuring, to all appearances, fatally, one or two men. It was no happy augury; and as the wounded were borne along the trench and approach to the rear, the



spirits of the beholders seemed depressed. Such is the terror of concealed dangers.

This occurrence caused a few moments' delay, and it was quarter to six when the movement commenced. Precisely at that time, Lieut.-Col. Vifquain, in a clear, inspiring tone, and with his sword drawn, and elevated, gave the command, "Forward, Ninety-seventh!" Then he and his gallant regiment sprang upon the parapet, and with loud cheers, which were taken up by all the troops left behind, they dashed forward on the run. Instantly they were greeted with a shower of bullets, and before they had got twenty yards a few men fell. In less than half a minute the Eighty-third Ohio, led by Lieut.-Col. Baldwin, swept over the parapet in their front, and, with thrilling shouts, moved, on the run, for the redoubt in their front. Three or four pieces of artillery, from the garrison, quickly opened on these regiments, firing with great rapidity, and they also encountered a bitter musketry fire. The confederate sharpshooters at first were disposed to hold their position; and the men of the Ninety-seventh commenced firing when they had got eighty yards. The skirmish grew more and more bitter, the Ninety-seventh every minute gaining ground and the confederates giving way. While the skirmish was occurring, Lieut.-Col. Vifquain ran back with a prisoner to the trench from which he had started, then hastened to his regiment and resumed the charge, following the course of the Stockton road. The prisoner stated that the whole garrison still remained at Blakely. Every one could, by that time, see that such was the fact, for the confederates were getting out of their rifle-pits and falling back to their main works in literal swarms. Over a hundred of these were seen, in a straggling crowd, to ascend the hill on which was Redoubt No. 4, just south of the Stockton road. At the same time the breastworks appeared numerously manned. It was apparent there was to be a much severer struggle than had been expected.



The Ninety-seventh Illinois had got but a short distance when the Seventy-sixth Illinois, Col. S. T. Busey, sprang forward. About the same time, the Sixty-ninth Indiana, Lieut.-Col. O. Perry, also rushed forward; and, afterward, the Twenty-fourth Indiana, Lieut.-Col. Sears, charged from the right. These regiments advanced on the run with great enthusiasm and gallantry. The Sixty-ninth Indiana took the Stockton road, and entered the confederate works a little south of that road. Lieut.-Col. Perry was severely wounded before he had got two hundred yards. The Seventy-sixth Illinois charged directly on the redoubt in their front, the one north of the Stockton road, and preserved its alignment well till it got to the second line of abatis. One man of that regiment was killed at the first line of abatis and rifle-pits; then, at the second line, the battle became fierce and bloody. The confederates maintained a bold front from behind their breastworks, and when the Seventy-sixth was within fifty yards of the redoubt, they suffered severely from the confederate musketry and artillery. While a part of the regiment maintained a spirited fire, the rest crossed the abatis. Lieut. Wm. F. Kenaga was shot through a leg at the second abatis, and nearer the works was hit in the ankle-joint of his other leg; then, unable to walk, he kept upright on his knees and rallied and cheered the men. The color-sergeant, Hussey, was killed within twenty feet of the works; then the colors were taken by the noble and brave Corporal Goldwood, who, as he was planting them on the parapet, received the contents of three muskets so close that the discharge burnt his clothes, and he fell dead inside the works with the colors in his arms.

The Seventy-sixth and the confederates were now fighting across the works, and those of the regiment in the rear were coming up as fast as they could pass the obstructions. Col. Busey ran along close to the parapet, and, with his revolver, disabled the gunner of a howitzer about to be fired, and which

afterward proved to have a double charge of grape and canister; then turning to the right, he exchanged shots with two at short range. Afterward, he ordered Lieut.-Col. Jones, with Capts. Hughes and Ingerson, and Lieut. Warner, with from twenty to fifty men, to charge the right flank of the redoubt, while he, with another squad, charged the front. They charged with bayonets, and drove the confederates from the works.

Fifty yards in rear of the redoubt the ground began to slope considerably. It had been cleared of thick underbrush, and the latter had been piled in a row along the crest. Behind that cover the confederates formed again, and gave another volley, wounding, among others, Col. Busey and Capt. Hughes. Then the Seventy-sixth charged them again, and they threw down their arms, and ran into the woods and toward the landing. Col. Busey sent detachments in pursuit of them. Upward of four hundred prisoners fell into the possession of the Seventy-sixth. It had five men killed inside the works. Its whole number of killed was sixteen, of whom, besides those already mentioned, were Sergeant Perkins and Corporals Hopkins and Tremain. There were eighty wounded, some mortally; so that its entire casualties were about one hundred. Among the wounded were Lieuts. Martin and Warner. The Seventy-sixth Illinois entered the works over the south salient of the redoubt, and over the breastworks extending south. Its national colors were planted on the breastwork. It was claimed by his comrades that Private Eldrick Bromillet, of Company D, was the first one of the regiment over the works. He was killed fifty yards inside the works by a confederate captain, and the latter was killed by Bromillet's comrade. That regiment used the bayonet in the charge, and displayed throughout the highest degree of valor. No regiment on the field that day suffered so heavily, none exhibited more intrepid bravery. And higher praise than that cannot be awarded troops.



The Twenty-fourth Indiana entered the works on the right of the Seventy-sixth Illinois, soon after the latter had possession. The right of the Twenty-fourth had to pass one or two deep ravines, in which was wet ground covered with fallen trees, and, when part way to the confederate works, the regiment was halted, and ordered to lie down. But such was the ardor of the men, that their commander found it difficult to restrain them, and bade them go on. Such was their ardor they did not stop to capture the confederate skirmishers, nor even to disarm all they met. One of the latter raised his hands, to indicate his submission, and after the Twenty-fourth men had passed him turned and fired on them, grazing the ear of a man named Messer. The latter then turned upon him, and shot him dead. A man named Walker, in Company C, had told his comrades where he would fall, and after they had passed the spot they looked back, and saw that he was indeed lying there. A shell burst right over the Twenty-fourth, enveloping the men in a cloud of smoke, yet doing no more serious injury than tearing to pieces the hat of one man, the cartridge-box of another, and the stock of another's musket. However, the confederates thought it had done more mischief, and raised a cheer. The loss of the Twenty-fourth was about twelve, killed and wounded. Not far from the works, fell the lamented Capt. George E. Merchant, commanding Company D. He lived only till the next day. He was an excellent officer, and dearly beloved by his company and comrades.

The Ninety-seventh Illinois had pushed forward over the obstructions, against a dreadful fire, and, having started deployed as skirmishers, the men got much scattered; but they well knew how to take care of themselves, and officers and men performed their duty with unflinching valor. The colors of the regiment were planted on the works between the Stockton road and the redoubt south of it, almost simultaneously with the



Eighty-third Ohio. They were carried by Sergeant Edwin D. Lowe, and in the charge they were struck and torn by the fire of the artillery, but, unharmed himself, he kept them conspicuously in the advance, and, undismayed by the thick dangers around him, planted them firmly on the works, then fell with a mortal wound. But the hand that struck him down was soon itself laid cold, by an unerring shot from one of the color-guard. The Ninety-seventh Illinois lost nine killed and fifty-three wounded. Among the latter were five officers. Capt. Howard and Lieut. Orem were both struck down when near the main works. The loss in the Sixty-ninth Indiana battalion was ten, wounded. Col. Spiceley and staff entered the works about with the Twenty-fourth.

The right of the Eighty-third Ohio had three ravines to pass, and the ravine nearest the garrison works was deep and long enough to include nearly the whole of the regiment. When it had advanced about two hundred yards, it had come to the principal line of confederate rifle-pits, still to some extent occupied. The Eighty-third there paused a few moments for the right to get up out of the ravine; the confederate sharpshooters' guns were taken from those who surrendered, and broken. Then the colors of the Eighty-third moved on the line still advancing as fast as the nature of the ground and the obstacles of brush and logs would admit. It soon began to descend the ravine two hundred yards from the main works, and for two or three long minutes was lost sight of. It was passing the ravine through which ran a rivulet, and in the bottom of which was a jungle of slashings almost defying the passage of persons even at a time of leisure and unencumbered with weapons. Then it began to ascend the high ground in front of the redoubt where were some detached rifle-pits. A few steps farther and it was up to another line of abatis, breast-high, apparently impassable, and fifty yards from the works.

Before this the foremost of the Eighty-third stooped down to avoid the destructive fire which was being poured upon them, to take breath, and to wait till the wings could close up. Fifteen yards inside of the line of abatis just before them was another line, not readily seen at a distance, consisting of stakes firmly driven into the ground close together, and sharpened at the end. Then, thirty-five yards from that, was the ditch and the high parapet of the redoubt. The infantry troops which manned that redoubt and the adjacent breastworks, consisted of Cockrell's Missouri brigade, comprising the First, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Missouri infantry, and the First and Third Missouri cavalry, dismounted; one of the most famous fighting brigades of the confederate army. These troops stood up in a bold manner behind their breastworks, firing on their assailants as if they hoped to repulse them. There seemed to be a constant blaze of musketry along the breastworks. The artillery was served with the same desperate energy. The guns vomited forth grape and canister with a fury that made one shudder. But most of the shots went over the mark.

While the Eighty-third Ohio was in that position the Sixty-ninth Indiana and Ninety-seventh Illinois were on their right, on lower ground, near the Stockton road, and hotly engaged. Lieut. Col. Baldwin caused part of his regiment to return the fire of the garrison while the rest made an opening through the abatis. The colors of the regiment were flying conspicuously, and both flagstuffs were shot in two and the colors riddled with bullets.

While this scene was occurring, a division staff-officer was sent to have the Twenty-fourth Indiana move down to reinforce the Ninety-seventh Illinois, whose colors were seen not far from the main works; but the Twenty-fourth was already on the way to the works farther to the right, and the officer found it inside of them. About the same time, another staff-officer was sent to



hasten forward the main line of the Third brigade in support of the Eighty-third Ohio ; but before he reached its commander, it was advancing on the double-quick, the colors flying, the men cheering, and the whole line looking splendidly. On the right, was the Thirty-fourth Iowa, Col. G. W. Clark ; next the One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio, Col. J. H. Kelly ; the Thirty-seventh Illinois, Col. Charles Black ; and the Twentieth Iowa, Lieut.-Col. J. B. Leake ; all superior regiments, with gallant and able commanders. Their appearance on the field, of course, began to excite dismay in those against whom the Eighty-third was contending. Lieut.-Col. Baldwin, as soon as a passage was opened through the abatis, gave the order for the regiment again to advance. This was done with a dauntless spirit. The men, with their bayonets, pried an opening through the next line of abatis, then rushed forward, bearing their flying colors, and, though still encountering numerous obstructions, in the nature of wire lines, were soon upon the redoubt. Capt. Garry, of the Eighty-third, was among the first to mount the parapet, but a private soldier is said to have been the first over them. Lieut.-Col. Baldwin was soon on the parapet ; and seeing that the most of his regiment was ready to mount the works, he jumped down inside, and cried out, "Surrender !" The commanding officer inquired, "To whom do we surrender ?" Baldwin answered, "To the Eighty-third Ohio." Then the officer said, "I believe we did that once before,"—referring to a somewhat similar occasion at Vicksburgh.

It was about twenty minutes from the time the Eighty-third began the charge till it was in possession of the works ; but some contest was kept up for a few minutes in rear of the redoubt after the first had entered. Two volleys were fired inside the works, in the edge of the woods, five minutes after the Eighty-third was inside.

The loss of the Eighty-third Ohio was seven killed and twenty-



one wounded. Among the killed were Corporal Hughes, and Privates De Mar (on the works), Cook, Cox, Anderson, and Van Amsdale. Among the wounded were Capt. Gary and Lieut. Snyder.

The other regiments of Moore's brigade met with some resistance. The Thirty-fourth Iowa had three killed, and twelve wounded. The brigade commander advanced in the charge near that regiment. A man of Company H, of the Thirty-fourth, was shot at by a wounded confederate lying in a rifle-pit, having been passed by the skirmishers. Another man, of Company H, then dealt him a fatal blow with his clubbed musket. The loss in the Thirty-seventh Illinois was one killed and three wounded. In the One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio, two wounded. The Twentieth Iowa escaped loss in the assault, and only had its flag shot through. That regiment entered the works at the two-gun battery, on the brow of the ravine, south of Redoubt No. 4. About eight hundred prisoners were taken in front of Moore's brigade. The whole number of prisoners taken by the Second division was thirteen hundred, including a general commanding a division; also ten or twelve guns and several stands of colors. The works carried, in its front, were three quarters of a mile in extent, and embraced two strong redoubts (Nos. 3 and 4) and a two-gun battery. After dark, while the men were picking up the dead and wounded, a few torpedoes were exploded. In this way a man of the Second Connecticut battery and one of the One Hundred and Fourteenth Ohio were killed, and one or two others wounded. The whole loss of the Second division in the assault was two hundred and thirty-three, namely: forty-one killed and one hundred and ninety-two wounded. The confederate loss in killed and wounded, in front of that division was not fully ascertained. About twenty confederates were buried near the works.

*Veatch's Division.*—Next, on the left, in Veatch's division, Dennis' brigade had the advance, the Third brigade, Lieut.-Col. Kinsey commanding, being held in reserve. Slack's brigade was not called out of camp, it having been on duty the preceding night in going to and returning from Spanish fort. Gen. Dennis' brigade was disposed as follows: The Eighth Illinois (Ogelsby's old regiment), a veteran and splendid regiment, Col. Sheetz commanding, was in the advance parallel. The Eleventh Illinois (veteran), Col. Coats commanding, was to follow in support in line of battle on the left, and the Forty-sixth Illinois, Col. Dornblaser, on the right. Col. Sheetz was instructed to advance, with the Eighth Illinois deployed as skirmishers, as soon as he saw the troops moving in the assault on his right and left.

At the moment the Eighth Illinois advanced, the Eighty-third Ohio had got about halfway to the main works. The line of the Eighth Illinois, deployed in one rank, extended about four hundred yards. The regiment numbered seven hundred. The distance to the confederate works was six hundred yards. There was first a slight ravine to pass, and then the ground was moderately level; but the course of the right of the line lay over the irregularly-scalloped side of a deep ravine. There were two or three lines of abatis to overcome, and the ground was partly covered with fallen trees. There was also some obstruction by wires. Yet that, including a strip of ground adjoining on the left, was, perhaps, the smoothest part of the field of Blakely, and it was, perhaps, the most exposed.

The Eighth Illinois took up the soldiers' war-cry, and rushed forward in the charge with all the compulsive force that a skirmish-line can have. They made but short pause at the confederate rifle-pits. Those of the occupants who did not fall back rapidly to their main works, were killed or captured. The abatis was passed, either by springing over it, or by pulling



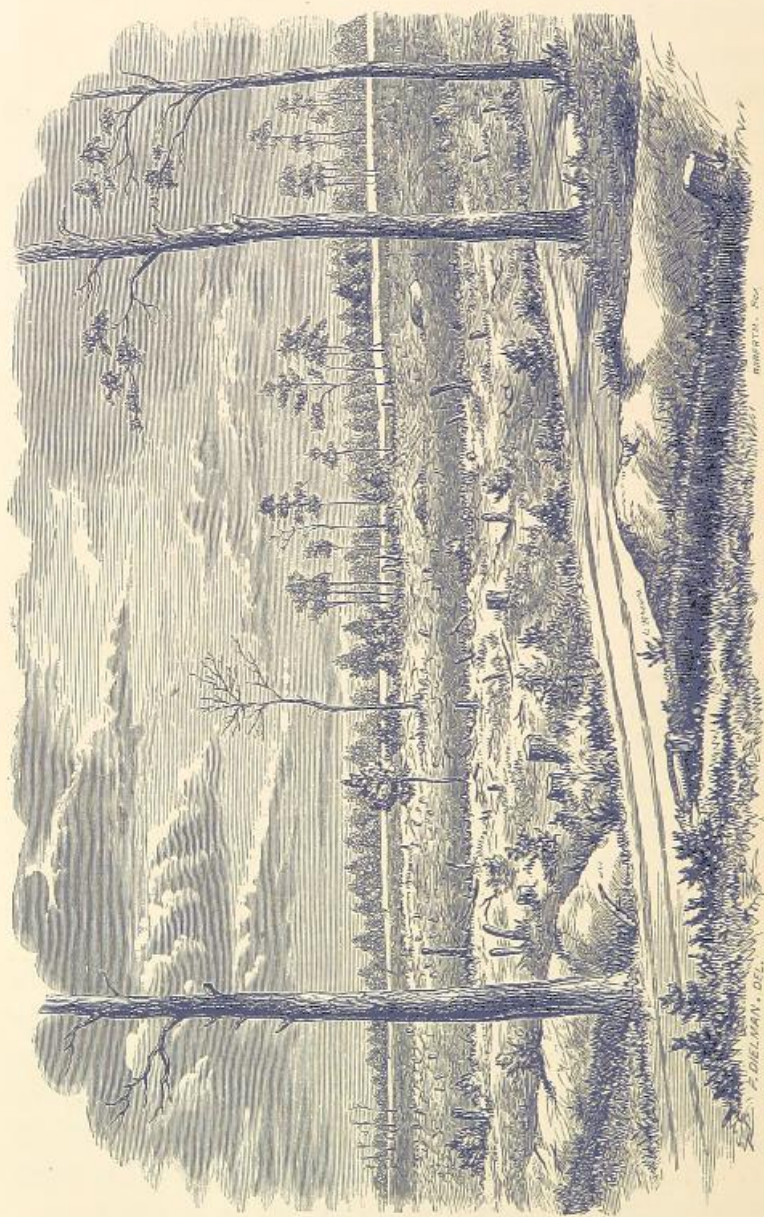
it one side and making passage ways through it. The nearer the Eighth got to the main works, the fiercer raged the tempest of bullets against them. Besides a constant volume of musketry, they encountered the rapid fire of four pieces of artillery. They returned the fire to some extent. Meantime the besiegers' batteries in their rear were dropping shells on the garrison's works with excellent effect. When within about a hundred yards of the main works, the contest seemed desperate, and it was apparent the Eighth was losing many. The Eleventh and Forty-sixth had got halfway over the field, moving in a gallant manner, when an order reached them to *halt*, the right of Garrard's division having been seen to pause. Then the orderly, Murray, who carried the order, went on with a similar one to the Eighth, but the latter, with victorious strides, was already on the parapets of the redoubt, and the brave orderly entered the works close by Lieut.-Col. Wheaton, of the Eighth. The latter and Sergt. John Switzer, of Company B, were the first of the regiment upon the works. A shot from one of the besiegers' batteries struck the parapet while Wheaton was going over the works; and while he was close to the parapet, two men of the Eighth were killed by the last artillery fire from the redoubt. Wheaton ordered Sergt. Switzer to shoot the gunner; but before it could be done, Sergt. Henderson had struck him down with the butt of his musket.

Capt Miller entered several yards to the left of Wheaton, and Private James B. Garwood, of his company, was shot down by his side when on the top of the works. Capt. Miller there encountered an officer of the garrison, who attempted to shoot him with a revolver, and took him prisoner. Then seeing their flag, which was planted in the ground that the bearer might better assist in the defence, he tore it from the staff.

The confederates fell back from their works, into the timber,







BLAKELY—VIEW FROM THE RIGHT OF GARRARD'S DIVISION.

and continued firing till the most of the Eighth were over the breastworks. As soon as the Eleventh and Forty-sixth had come up, the Eighth moved down toward the landing.

Veatch's loss in the assault was thirteen killed and sixty-four wounded. Of these the Eighth Illinois lost ten killed and fifty-four wounded. Among the severely wounded of the Eighth were Capt. Coleman—who, after having been brought to the ground, continued to wave his sword and cheer his men—also Lieuts. Sanderson and Harrington.

In Veatch's front were captured about three hundred prisoners, one thirty-pounder Parrott, one ten-pounder Parrott, two twelve-pounder howitzers, and one VIII-inch columbiad. The latter was in position, but the embrasure for it had not been finished.

*Garrard's Division.*—The trench containing the right of the First brigade (Col. Rinaker's), and left of the Third brigade (Col. Harris'), of this division, being the nearest point to the confederate works, Gen. Garrard directed that the assault in his front should commence there, and be taken up on the right and left. His order of attack was two lines of skirmishers, to be supported by the main line of battle. When the first skirmish line had started, and appeared to be advancing with success, the second line was to follow, and when the first line had reached the enemy's works, the main line was to charge. This plan was adopted by him on account of the terrible obstructions in his front.

His three brigades were in position at about the appointed hour. Col. Rinaker, assisted by his acting aide-de-camp, Lieut. McLain, of the Eighty-ninth Indiana, had been arranging the position of his brigade, and was about ready to give the order to advance, when the commander of the Third Indiana light battery reported to him for orders. This caused him a little delay, and his brigade did not move precisely with Harris'.



Col. Harris' brigade was formed in two lines. In the first line, the Fifty-eighth Illinois, Capt. John Murphy commanding, was on the right; the Eleventh Wisconsin, Maj. J. S. Miller, on the left; the One Hundred and Seventy-eighth New York, Lieut.-Col. J. B. Gondalfo, in the centre. In the second line, the Thirty-fourth New Jersey, Col. Lawrence, was on the right; and the Fifty-second Indiana, Lieut.-Col. Main, on the left. Company A, Capt. Park, Company F, Lieut. McConnell, and Company D, Capt. Toms, of the Eleventh Wisconsin, were selected for the skirmish-line of that regiment, and they deployed and lay down in front of the trench previous to the movement. These troops had to charge six hundred yards (more than one third of a mile), over broken ground, covered with the usual amount of obstructions. At quarter to six o'clock, Col. Harris directed his acting assistant adjutant-general, Capt. R. E. Jackson, of the Eleventh Wisconsin, to order the charge to commence; which order was soon given, and promptly obeyed. When the skirmish-line of the Eleventh had gained one hundred yards, they received such a heavy fire from the confederates' well-fortified and numerous manned pits, that Maj. Miller, fearing they would be checked, took the responsibility of ordering forward the rest of his regiment, commanding, "Forward, Eleventh!" Instantly the Eleventh Wisconsin sprang out of their trench, and, with the ringing cheers of veterans, rushed onward, with emulous ardor and high resolve, to victory or death. They followed so closely upon the retreating confederate skirmishers, as to save themselves from a general fire from the main works till within about one hundred yards of them. Then they encountered a destructive fire of musketry, and grape, and canister.

Though many were struck down, and the ranks of the leading groups were visibly thinned, the survivors moved on with unflinching step to the main works, and there engaged

in a hand-to-hand contest with the most unyielding spirits of the garrison. Lieut. Angus R. McDonald, Sergeant Daniel B. Moore, and six others, were within thirty yards of the works, and, by Lieut. McDonald's orders, they fixed bayonets, and charged them. When close to the parapet a volley killed five of their number, and knocked the lock off of Moore's gun. Then McDonald ordered that they should wait till others came up; but Sergeant Moore, in the din, not hearing the order, mounted the works. The gallant Corporal Joel Wheeler, of Company A, had preceded him and was shot dead on the parapet. McDonald quickly followed and demanded a surrender. At that time the main part of the Eleventh was coming up within a few yards, but one or two volleys were afterward fired on them from behind the works. A portion of the garrison had already broke and was fleeing toward the landing. Where McDonald and Moore entered were eight who surrendered; but ten yards to their right was a squad of twelve under charge of an officer, who were still pouring a deadly fire into the right of the Eleventh. The officer exclaimed: "No quarter to the d——d Yankees." Lieut. McDonald and Sergeant Moore fell into their hands, and then followed a desperate struggle. Five or six attacked McDonald with bayonets, but he fought them with his sword, knocking some down, and killed two. He received two bayonet thrusts in his breast and a musket ball in his thigh, when he fell. A confederate fell over him whom he used as a shield against a farther thrust by the bayonet. Then Sergeant Moore, who had also received a bayonet wound, picked up a confederate musket and shot McDonald's assailant dead.

Other gallant men of the Eleventh were soon upon the works, closely followed by the regiment. Then came with eager step the rest of the brigade with its commander, Col. Harris; and when the troops were in full possession of the works a shout of



triumph went up that baffles description. The men flocked around their commander with earnest and joyful greetings. But no single voice could be heard. Col. Harris pointed up to the flag, now proudly waving on the captured works. Then again the emotions of patriotism and of victory burst forth in tumultuous shouts. Near them the ground was thickly strewn with the wounded and the dead, and many of the latter were buried near the works. Among the killed in the Eleventh Wisconsin, were Lieut. Richard Coddell, Sergeant W. H. Phelps, and Corporals Wheeler, Allbaugh, Shea, and Ingamills. Its whole number of killed was fifteen, and it had two commissioned officers, including Lieut. Wm. Charlton, twelve non-commissioned officers, and thirty-two privates wounded. Total casualties in the Eleventh Wisconsin, sixty-one. In the Fifty-eighth Illinois, Lieut. Thomas Malloy was killed on the works, and Lieut. Atwater severely wounded; and there were other casualties in that regiment. In the One Hundred and Seventy-eighth New York, there was one killed and four wounded; in the Fifty-second Indiana two killed and eight wounded; in the Thirty-fourth New Jersey, Corporal Hampton was killed and three were wounded.

Soon after the works in Harris' front were taken, detachments of his brigade marched down to the landing for prisoners. The Fifty-second Indiana was placed as guard over the artillery and prisoners.

Similar enthusiasm and gallantry characterized Gen. Gilbert's brigade, next on the right, which advanced soon after Harris'. It was formed in three lines. The Tenth Kansas, Lieut.-Col. Charles S. Hills commanding, and Company B, of the Twenty-seventh Iowa, deployed as skirmishers in the advanced trench, six hundred yards from the main works. The Twenty-seventh Iowa, Col. Lake; the One Hundred and Seventeenth Illinois, Col. Moore, and Companies D, H, and K, of the Thirty-second



Iowa, under Maj. Hutchinson, in the second line. The Sixth Minnesota, Lieut.-Col. Grant, and the other seven companies of the Thirty-second Iowa, Lieut.-Col. Eberhart, forming the reserve line, and posted eleven hundred yards from the main works. The severest part of the charge fell upon the Tenth Kansas, and they breasted the storm that beat against them with a noble heroism. In their front, as elsewhere, the artillery uttered its last fierce thunders, pouring forth shell, grape, and canister; the musketry volleys rolled along the line in quick succession, and clouds of smoke rose up from the works. The Tenth Kansas directed their steps toward the Sixth redoubt; yet such was the fire upon them, and not wishing to pause to return it, they turned for a moment down the side of a ravine. But an enfilading fire greeted them there; and with hardly a pause, they soon gained the high ground again, crossed two lines of abatis, then the ditch, and mounted the parapets.

The furious fire that had beset them, made them cluster in a group, and they entered the works more as a column in mass than in line. Then, with fixed bayonets, they swept along the works to their right, mixing blue and gray together; and the latter, seeing their helpless condition, huddled into the angles of the fort, and making little resistance, surrendered by scores. Yet there was some firing after the Tenth were inside the works, for a number of the confederates refused to surrender. One captain caught up a musket and fired at Capt. Wood, of the Tenth, while the latter was calling on him to surrender, and then another, and a third musket, each time failing to hit Capt. Wood.

Then Corporal Schultz, of the Tenth, sent a ball through the confederate's head, and he fell. Several other instances of the same kind occurred. Meantime, some of the leading confederate officers were approaching officers of the Tenth, handing them their swords, and beseeching them to stop the

"butchery," as they termed it. But it appears none were intentionally killed after they had ceased fighting. The confederate commanders were not able to get all to surrender, even after resistance seemed utterly fruitless.

A number of pieces of artillery and several hundred prisoners were captured in Gilbert's front.

The Tenth Kansas had seven killed and twelve wounded, and of the latter, Lieut. John Bryan and Private Plummer died of their wounds. Among the killed were Sergeant George Daller and Corporals Buxton and Thompson. There were four wounded in the Twenty-seventh Iowa, including Lieut. Eisenhart; one killed and one wounded in the One Hundred and Seventeenth Illinois; one wounded in the Sixth Minnesota, and one in the Thirty-second Iowa. The whole loss in Gilbert's brigade was eight killed and nineteen wounded. After the brigade was in possession of the works, large detachments hurried down to the landing, and through the woods, for prisoners. Maj. Hutchinson, of the Thirty-second Iowa, with a squad of eight men, held a large number of confederates in check, in range of their gunboats, in a manner to prevent the latter from firing on the Union troops.

Rinaker's brigade had from three hundred to four hundred yards of rough ground to charge over, before reaching the confederate works. The One Hundred and Nineteenth Illinois, Col. Thomas J. Kinney, deployed as skirmishers, commenced the charge in front of that brigade, advancing with cheers, on the run, at a signal by the bugle. The supporting line consisted of the Eighty-ninth Indiana on the right, the One Hundred and Twenty-second Illinois in the centre, and the Twenty-first Missouri on the left. Lieut.-Col. Craven, of the Eighty-ninth Indiana, had accompanied the regiment down to the front, although ill, but was not able to take part in the charge, and the command fell upon Major Winter. At the second



signal on the bugle, these three regiments advanced with eager step. The most of the One Hundred and Nineteenth was then only thirty yards in front; and the ground was so irregular, and the obstacles so numerous, that both lines were soon merged together. Yet the latter regiment pushed forward as fast as men could go, stopping to fire but little. The greater part of the confederates retreated from their rifle-pits to the main works, and it seemed to be a race between them and the assaulting troops as to which should reach them first. A vehement and excited fire from the main works assailed the advancing troops, the artillery of two redoubts being turned upon them. Yet the guns did less injury than was to have been apprehended. Each regiment sustained some loss. Lieut.-Col. Drish, of the One Hundred and Twenty-second, fell struck by a piece of shell, and the command devolved on Major Chapman. Two of that regiment, named Miller, were killed, and eleven wounded. In the Eighty-ninth Indiana, one—Corporal Cowan—was killed, and five wounded, two of whom, Hutchinson and Coppock, died. The color-bearer of the Twenty-first Missouri was shot down when near the works, and they were seized by Cox of Company G, One Hundred and Twenty-second Illinois, and planted on the works. The loss in the One Hundred and Nineteenth was sixteen killed and wounded—and the most of those casualties occurred in Capt. Hubbard's company, and his brother, Edward P. Hubbard, a private soldier, was among the mortally wounded. Some twenty of that company charged the works with fixed bayonets, and were among the first to enter them. As Rinaker's brigade got close to the works, the most of the infantry—Alabama reserves—retreated toward the river. The artillerists, however, held their positions, and, refusing to surrender, were shot. Many of the artillerists were armed with rifles. After entering the works, the Twenty-first Missouri and Capt. Bostwick's company, of the One Hundred and Twenty-



second Illinois, turned to the left and charged down in rear of the works to the last redoubt. Rinaker's brigade took three or four battle-flags, the artillery in their front, and several hundred prisoners.

The redoubts in Garrard's front had eighteen embrasures, and his division carried all the works in its front, capturing the artillery, and sixteen hundred prisoners, including two general officers. The loss in his division was: commissioned officers, two killed and seven wounded; enlisted men, thirty-nine killed and one hundred and seventeen wounded; total, one hundred and sixty-five.

The total casualties of the federals, engaged in the assault, was one hundred and twenty-seven killed and five hundred and twenty-seven wounded; grand total, six hundred and fifty-four. Number of prisoners captured, three thousand four hundred and twenty-three, including three general officers. There were also captured, several battle-flags, upward of forty pieces of artillery, the small arms used by the infantry, and all the garrison stores.

It is not easy to estimate the loss of the garrison in killed and wounded; but it was probably a third as large as that of the besiegers. There were a few boats out in the stream, and some of the garrison attempted to swim to them, and it was reported a number were drowned.

Wellington well said that a battle could not be painted. Neither can language fully describe so great and ever-changing a scene.

It has been seen what was the nature of the ground over which the assault was made; that it was cut up by ravines, rough, and covered with obstructions. It was known, also, to be mined with torpedoes in various places; and there was reason to dread them.

Thirty-five regiments—fully sixteen thousand troops—partici-

pated in the assault. The lines were three miles in length, and the advance of the entire line was remarkably simultaneous.

The scene was picturesque and grand. From different points of view the assaulting lines could be seen for a mile or two, as far even as the forms of men could be distinguished moving over the broken ground. The regimental colors, though not in perfect line, were steadily advancing, and the troops were dashing on over and through the obstructions like a stormy wave. It was at a moment when the shock of battle was the fiercest. In the clamor could be heard the voices of the assaulting troops. Nothing could exceed their enthusiasm. If then they could have known the great event that had occurred a few hours before—that Lee had surrendered—and that their contest would probably be the last important struggle of the war, they could hardly have experienced more exulting emotions, or pressed forward with more dauntless step. It seemed as if “all the joy, all the sensation of life, was in that one moment, that they cast themselves with the fierce gladness of mountain torrents, headlong on that brief revelry of glory.”

Gen. Steele, during the assault, was along the front of the Second division, and, with his staff, kept up with the main line of Moore's brigade. When he saw the advance line entering the works, he exclaimed: “I knew they would do it. I told you they would go over those works.”

He soon after sat down, and signed a despatch to Gen. Canby, which Capt. Lacy, his assistant adjutant-general, had written, in these words: “We have stormed the entire line of works, and our troops are now in full possession.” A reply soon came, written by Col. Christensen, saying: “Gen Canby says: ‘God bless you, and God bless your brave command.’”

It was dark before the prisoners could be collected together and formed to march back with the different divisions to their camps; and great care had to be taken to avoid dangers from

torpedoes. All the fore part of that night, there were occasional explosions of torpedoes, and a few men were killed by them while searching for the dead and wounded. It was a discordant and melancholy sound to hear.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### OBSERVATIONS ON THE SIEGE AND ASSAULT OF BLAKELY.

1. THE fall of Blakely, and capture of its garrison, left the confederates only four thousand five hundred troops for the immediate defence of Mobile, which being too small a force to hold the city, they marched, on the 11th, for Meridian. Gen. Maury followed at daylight of the 12th.

Canby, by signals, learned of the evacuation of the city the evening of the 11th, and had troops immediately in motion for its occupation. Granger, with the First and Third divisions of his corps, embarked on transports at Stark's landing, at daylight of the 12th, and, with a portion of the squadron, under Thatcher, crossed over the bay, landing two miles below the city, and entered it unopposed. The Third division marched on to Whistler's station, and overtook and skirmished with the rear-guard of the confederate column.

It was not Gen. Canby's purpose, under any circumstances, to besiege Mobile from the land side. If the city had held out longer, he would have moved across the head of the bay, by means of transports and pontoons, and established batteries on the islands in front of the city. And some steps toward such a movement had already been taken.

2. The *conduct of the garrison* of Blakely is, on the whole, deserving of commendation. The troops manifested much energy and spirit during the siege, often making bold sallies in the night, and disturbing the besiegers. They were expecting an assault about the time it took place, and felt considerable confi-

dence they could repulse it. Had an assault been made before the fall of Spanish fort, it would probably have been more bloody, though not repulsed; for the garrison would have had more hope in resisting. But, after they knew that fifteen or twenty thousand more troops had come up from Spanish fort (these, however, were two miles in the rear in their camps), they had reason to feel that the odds against them were too great for successful resistance. The assaulting troops had the moral reinforcement of the Spanish fort troops.

The garrison had a large number of sharpshooters or skirmishers in pits three hundred yards in front of their main works. These had an opportunity to fire only one or two rounds, and then fell back; but there being no covered way, and not being able, on account of the obstacles, to move rapidly, they were for a short time a sort of cover to the assaulting troops, embarrassing, if not preventing, the fire of those behind the main works. If, instead of being three hundred yards to the front, they had been in pits fifty yards in front, with approaches to the main works, a double line of musketry fire could then have been poured on the assaulting troops just as they were reaching the most difficult abatis.

The rules for defending fortifications require the garrison to mount the parapet when they find the assaulting troops are attacking closely. This does not appear to have been done anywhere on the line.

3. But it was a mistake to keep the garrison at Blakely an hour after the fall of Spanish fort. Every possible means should have been used to remove it before an assault could be made. But Gen. Maury alleges: "It would have been difficult to do this after day dawned, and up to that time all of Spanish fort garrison had not been transferred from Blakely to Mobile."

4. Gen. Maury, in an account which he wrote of the siege,

makes the just remark, that "the *marshes* about Mobile, as marshes almost everywhere else, produced a greater moral effect upon besiegers and besieged than facts justified." On account of the existence of a swamp on the left of the besiegers, the investment of Blakely was not complete on that flank to within four or five hundred yards. The swamp was narrow, and could have been bridged, and there was no good excuse for the investment being incomplete.

5. Whether the *time for the assault was favorable*, is an interesting question, and will doubtless be answered affirmatively. The troops engaged in it had the *moral* support of the presence of the rest of the army which had come from Spanish fort. When the garrison saw the assaulting lines advancing, they felt that the woods behind them were also full of troops; for they had heard of heavy columns moving over Minette bayou. Suppose the assault had taken place the day before? Is it not probable the resistance would have been greater? They certainly would have had more hope of effecting a repulse. As it was, the general assault was not repulsed at any point.

It is probable Gen. Steele would not have ordered a general assault for two or three days longer had it not been for the fall of Spanish fort, such was the distance—from five to six hundred yards—to charge over. But it perhaps saved life that the assault was made from the third parallel, and without waiting till a fourth was dug. The besiegers had *come upon torpedoes* in their digging, and doubtless many lives would have been lost by farther extending the approaches and trenches. After the assault, it was ascertained the advance trench, on the right of the Second division, *ran between two rows of torpedoes!*

6. The besiegers deserve commendation for the amount of *work they performed*. And, it should be remarked, that not one of their number was captured. Yet, unquestionably, more work



might have been performed; for there are few operations in which the energy and industry of men are exhausted. Each division constructed its works according to its own plans, and with but little, if any, outside professional assistance. Several miles of trenches and approaches were made, and they will long remain as proof of the labor that was done. Over the field of Blakely the bushes are beginning to grow up, and in a few years another forest will no doubt cover the ground. But many of the trenches will remain. The storms of centuries will not wear them away.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### REDUCTION OF FORTS HUGER AND TRACY.

FORTS Huger and Tracy held out three days after the fall of Spanish fort. They were not days of quiet. Guns were now turned on them from McDermett and old Spanish fort. The Octorara approached nearer and delivered a more unerring and effective fire. The old and a new battery on Bay Minette shore also hurled against them a copious shower of heavy projectiles. Both those forts replied with spirit. Their garrisons expected soon to evacuate, and were lavish of ammunition.

*April 9.*—Capt. Foust's battery (First Missouri) moved into old Spanish fort, unspiked two one-hundred-pounder Brooks' rifles, and opened them on Huger. In the evening one of them was bursted. Another one-hundred-pounder Parrott, under Lieut. Parker (First Indiana), was put in the Bay Minette shore battery, making two there of that calibre, which were also engaged. On the north shore of that bayou, batteries were begun for two more one-hundred-pounder rifles and four thirty-pounder rifles.

*The Navy.*—At twenty minutes past one, A. M., the squadron observed lights in Old Spanish fort, and twenty minutes afterward they received a message through the army signal officer, that the works were evacuated.

Torpedoes still held the navy in check; but energetic efforts were being made to remove them. About one hundred and fifty had already been removed. A second net having been

stretched across the channel, about a mile and a half above the first one, the intervening part of the channel was swept with chains, by tugs. At forty minutes past three, P. M., the Octorara and ironclads weighed and stood over the first net, steamed up to the second, and came to anchor a thousand yards below Old Spanish fort. The tall reeds on the marsh so obstructed the view of Huger, that range-stakes were necessary for pointing the guns; and as the reeds would not burn, men were sent on shore with poles, and a lane was beaten, through which the fort could be seen.

The Octorara now opened fire on Huger with her hundred-pounder Parrott, at a distance of five thousand four hundred yards—a little upward of three miles! Her first shots fell short. Some of the Spanish fort garrison had not yet got away from Huger; the noise of the Octorara's shells were familiar to them, and they joyfully congratulated themselves when they saw them fall short. Soon, however, a shell came and plunged into the river, three hundred yards above the fort. The next one struck the very centre of the works, making their boggy foundations rock and tremble (to use the expression of one who was there) like a ship in a gale of wind. The subsequent shots told with good effect on their bombproofs. One man was killed.

The confederates thought the Octorara's gun was served with remarkable skill. It was a saying among them that it must be served by "one-eyed Brannegan," a famous gunner and deserter from their service. They considered indeed that it was handled with skill surpassing that of Sergeant Bonner, of the Twenty-second Louisiana regiment, who was celebrated in the confederate service for his efficiency in that respect.

The captain of this hundred-pounder gun on the Octorara, and who fired every round, was James Welsch, chief boatswain's mate, an old man-of-war's man. He was subsequently dis-



charged at the end of his three-years term of service. His skill was remarkable, and there should be inducements for such men to remain in the navy.

The gun itself was a navy-Parrott rifle, manufactured at the West Point foundry, under the supervision of its designer. Eighty-pound Parrott shells were fired from it, with the reduced charge of eight pounds of powder.

*April 10.*—The morning of the 10th was thick, and a shell fired at daylight, showed that it was best to suspend the fire. At half past nine, it was resumed in reply to guns which had opened on the Mustang, in which Gen. Bailey had gone up to Spanish fort, and continued slowly for two hours. At forty minutes past one, P. M., the guns of Huger were firing on the squadron's boats, which were sweeping for torpedoes; and the Octorara again opened fire in reply. But during the day she fired only seventy-three rounds. In course of the day the tug Glasgow came up with Commodore James S. Palmer on board, and being beyond signal distance from the Admiral's ship, his pendant as divisional commander, was hoisted.

Lieut. Beardsley, with Company K, Sixth Michigan, moved into Old Spanish fort in the forenoon, and relieved Capt. Foust. Besides serving the one hundred-pounder, Beardsley got a new thirty-pounder Parrott (made at Selma only a few months before) in position and at work. At four, P. M., Capt. Foust commenced with two of his light pieces, and at five, P. M., Beardsley got a twenty-pounder Parrott unspiked and at work. All the while the fire from Huger and Tracy was tremendous, for they were using more than a dozen heavy guns without mercy, and made it deathly hot around Old Spanish fort. A detachment of the Ninety-fourth Illinois opened fire with a thirty-pounder on McDermott.

*April 11.*—Foust's battery had been firing all night. At eleven o'clock of the same night, Lieut. Beardsley, with ten

men of his company, got a hundred-pounder Brooks rifle mounted in McDermett on a new carriage the garrison had just procured, but not used. Much to his surprise, Beardsley found that the gun was spiked and shotted. They then worked till it was just daylight, when they succeeded in blowing out the spike by firing the gun from the muzzle. They had scarcely lain down to get a little sleep when the guns from Huger opened on them. They then jumped up and returned the fire with the one-hundred-pounder. The firing continued heavy and grand through the day. It was the last day for great guns in Mobile bay—the last for the war. The smoke rolled up in cloudy columns. The bellowing peals reverberated far inland and far out upon the sea. Four thirty-pounders, from the north shore of Bay Minette, fired on Tracy. On the south shore, the two one-hundred-pounders, with the eight thirty-pounders of the First Indiana, were still engaged. Likewise the guns at Old Spanish fort, manned by Foust's company. During the day, a salute of one hundred shotted rounds was fired in honor of the national victories. Some twenty guns, in all, of the land-batteries were delivering a destructive fire on those forts. A battery was also in progress on the north shore of Bay Minette for two one-hundred-pounders and four thirty-pounders. From Huger, shot after shot came in quick succession, ploughing up the ground about McDermett. One shot destroyed a wheel of a thirty-pounder, and six shots were buried in the magazine.

The Octorara was also engaged at intervals during the day with her one-hundred-pounder.

In the evening, the guns of Huger and Tracy ceased their mighty roar, but not till the garrisons were ready to leave.

In the evening, Gen. A. J. Smith, with a detachment of his corps, went down to the shore of Bay Minette, intending to move out in the night in boats and flats and carry Huger and Tracy by assault. About ten, P. M., a signal officer, with orders

from him, went to Armstrong's battery to have the firing cease. This being complied with, the officers soon after turned their attention intently on those forts. As they sat peering through the darkness, with their glasses in the direction of Huger, they saw the glimmer of lanterns passing to and fro, and at about half-past ten, signal lights were seen. The indications were that the forts were being evacuated.

At about nine in the evening, the first cutter of the Octorara, on picket just below Huger, fell in with a skiff that was pulling down the river. In the skiff were eight men who represented themselves to be refugees and deserters from that fort. They said, in answer to questions, that Huger and Tracy had been hastily evacuated immediately after dark, and that the armament and ordnance stores had not been destroyed. This information was communicated to the officer in charge of the boats sweeping for torpedoes. A landing was made at the forts, and they were taken possession of by the officers and men of the boats. It seemed a happy and fitting circumstance that these forts should first come into the possession of the navy, not because the navy had done the most toward compelling their evacuation, but because it had done all it was possible to do, and in a good spirit. Yet, in the honors of victory all, of course, have a share. It is seldom, if ever, that any particular organization has a right to claim them entire; or to claim a specific share.

This night the pontoniers happened to be on duty in those waters. They had come to take away the canvas bridge—the lower one on the bayou—and in some way, it seems, got knowledge of the evacuation and entered the forts themselves. The next day the guns in those forts had inscriptions on them to this effect: "Eleven o'clock, P. M., April 11. Captured by the One Hundred and Fourteenth Illinois" (*pontoniers*). Also, the names of individual soldiers. This was an excellent joke, and a fine sarcasm on those thoughtless men who would parcel



out the honors of conquest. For pontoniers, though not expected to be the first inside a captured fort, have a share in the glory of the victory.

*Wednesday, April 12.*—The channel was swept with chains, by tugs, and the Octorara and ironclads, preceded by the Glasgow, steamed up to the obstructions at Huger. The Glasgow passed through the gap. During the night, a boat from the Octorara went up the Blakely river to the Tensas, and ascertained there were no other obstructions. At daylight on the 13th, the Octorara attempted to follow the Glasgow through the obstructions of the gap, but did not succeed. The channel was then blown out, and the wreck of a sunken scow removed. At about noon, the Octorara and the ironclads steamed through the gap and through Tensas and Spanish rivers, anchoring off Mobile at about eight o'clock, P. M.

Admiral Thatcher was already off Mobile, having the day previous, with a portion of the squadron, accompanied Granger's forces across the bay from Stark's landing.

A few days afterward the Sixteenth corps marched rapidly to Montgomery. Steele, with his command, proceeded to the same place on transports, leaving, however, one division at Selma.

The campaign may be said to have occupied twenty-two days.<sup>1</sup> The result has been seen. The number of prisoners accounted for by Canby's provost-marshal general was four thousand nine hundred and twenty-four. His own loss in killed and wounded was fifteen hundred.

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<sup>1</sup> Strength of Canby's army in the field:

Two divisions, and one brigade of Thirteenth corps,	13,200
Sixteenth corps,	16,000
Engineers, artillery, and cavalry,	3,000
Total,	32,200
Column under Steele,	13,200
Grand total,	45,400

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ADVENTURES AND INCIDENTS.

THE wheel of fortune does not always withhold its honors from those who, at obscure posts, are constant and faithful.

During the siege of Spanish fort, the base of supplies for the army was at Stark's landing. The commanding officer at a *base*, every one will admit, should be energetic, vigilant, and prudent. Wharves are to be built—labor day and night to be performed—ordnance and ammunition are to be received—vessels laden with provisions and forage are to arrive and be promptly discharged—sick and wounded soldiers are to be put aboard vessels and sent off. Industry, good order, humanity, should prevail. The quartermaster and commissary have much responsibility, but the military commander present is also responsible that everything goes right.

The officer in command at Stark's landing, also in command of the engineers, was Gen. Bailey, well-known for distinguished service in building a dam on Red river. While the inspiring scenes of battle had been occurring some distance off, yet in his hearing, he had been performing the duties of a more secluded position.

On the 9th of April, Gen. Canby being at Blakely, and anxious to get transports up to Spanish fort, inquired, through Gen. Osterhaus, chief of staff, by telegraph, of Bailey, if he could find some courageous captain, who would move up and try the channel?

Gen. Bailey replied, that he would try to find a captain of a

vessel who would go ; but, that failing to find one, he would go himself. Not long afterward he telegraphed again to Gen. Canby's headquarters, that the Mustang had come in, and that he would go up on her as soon as her freight was discharged, which was being rapidly done ; and inquired whether it would be better to go that evening or wait till morning. An answer promptly came, to wait till morning ; and that the commanding general felt much regret that he had determined to go himself on so perilous an adventure.

On the morning of the 10th, Gen. Bailey, with his staff, Maj. G. Pien, Fourth Wisconsin cavalry, Capt. J. H. Meredith, Lieuts. Nolan, Hill, Martin, and Burdick, embarked on the Mustang. She was a steamer which had formerly ran on the Rio Grande, but was now about worn out.

Having got into the channel, she soon passed the admiral's flag-ship, then, farther on, the monitors, and near them the three sunken ironclads, their hulls now just above the water. Some hundred yards more brought her to the first torpedo net. Her wheels stopped, and she glided over it. Half a mile farther they reached the Octorara, the advance gunboat, and there anchored. Gen. Bailey, with some of his staff, and the captain of the Mustang, went aboard the Octorara, and procured information concerning the channel. He also learned the progress that had been made in taking up torpedoes ; and that there was scarcely any danger in a light-draft boat, like the Mustang (drawing only two and a half feet) going to Spanish fort landing ; as boats and tugs of the squadron, drawing about as much, had been above there. He also learned that he would, in all probability, draw the fire of Fort Huger. The Mustang then steamed on up the river, and soon passed over the second net, from which several torpedoes had been taken the night before. After passing this, they had some cause to apprehend danger from floating torpedoes. But their



boats were ready to launch in case of accident. Finally, they reached the landing at Spanish fort in safety.

On going ashore, Gen. Bailey proceeded to the quarters of Col. Bertram; and had been there but a few minutes, when a signal-officer came in and informed him that the commander at Tracy had ordered every gun of Huger to be "brought to bear on that steamer, and, for G-d's sake, to sink her." At this announcement, Gen. Bailey, and staff, hastened on board, to put back to Stark's landing. But the Mustang was slow in turning, and getting into the channel, and shot and shell were all the while coming from Huger. Forty-one were fired at the Mustang, a few striking her, but they caused no serious injury, though an explosion of one of the shells disagreeably besprinkled some of the party with earth and sand.

She got back safely to Stark's landing, having been gone four hours, and Bailey reported the result of his trip. The commanding general telegraphed the following reply: "Your interesting report of the expedition to Spanish fort is received; and the promptness and signal bravery displayed by you are highly appreciated."

*Incidents of the Siege.*—Reckless exposure of life in a siege commands no part of that applause which is earned by daring in its true sense. Yet, light censure will be cast on such examples, considering the tendency for men to grow timid by long continued service in trenches.

The daily history of every regiment in the siege would doubtless exhibit individual acts of gallantry, and even of rashness, on the part of the enlisted men.

On the second day of the siege, Company D, Seventh Minnesota, was on the skirmish-line in McArthur's front, and had approached, under cover of logs and stumps, to within about three hundred and fifty yards of the garrison's main line of works. Sergeants Vidito and Canfield, and Private Leighton,

were farthest advanced, and in short musket-range of the confederates. They were each six foot high, and when they fired, would rise from behind a log, stand deliberately, and aim, discharge their muskets, and watch to see the effect. It was only after repeated commands from their captain that they became more cautious.

The consequence of unnecessary exposure was more apt to be like what occurred in the following case : On the 5th of April, a man of the Thirty-fifth Wisconsin persisted in standing on the bank in rear of the sunken battery of the Sixth Michigan. On being told by one of the men that he would be hit, replied : "The ball isn't moulded yet that would hit me." Scarcely had the words been uttered when he received a ball through his right elbow ; a wound that lost the poor fellow his arm.

When the annals of war are truly written, painful blunders are often disclosed, which repress the exultation of victory.

The night Spanish fort was being evacuated, two federal soldiers, who had been for some time held as prisoners at Fort Tracy, managed, amid the darkness and confusion, to make their escape in a skiff. Reaching the main land, they moved cautiously along the shore ; but some of the federals having followed down after the retreating garrison, heard the rustling of the bushes, and thinking it was some straggling confederates, challenged them to surrender. Presuming the demand came from confederates, the fugitives made no answer, whereupon they were fired on, and one of them was instantly killed. The other cried for quarter, and soon found himself among friends. The body of his dead comrade was secured and buried with funeral honors.

So, during the siege, each side lost a few killed by the accidents or mistakes of its own firing.

The night before the final bombardment, Capt. Garrity and a man of his battery made their way up to where the federals,

in McArthur's front, were digging an approach, and so close that some of the dirt was thrown upon them. Garrity listened to the talk of the men, and heard them say, "We'll give the rebels — to-morrow."

One night, in the same division front, some confederates came out to relieve the sharpshooters, and the federals gave them a volley that quite disconcerted them, and drove the most of them back into the main works. In the excitement, one of their number, a son of Erin, ran up to one of the federal pits, and stooping down, anxiously inquired, "Is this No. 3?" "Yes; jump down quick!" was the answer. Down he jumped, a prisoner.

One night, the Eighth Wisconsin skirmishers captured a small confederate post of three men, one of whom was an Irishman. He was asked if the confederates had any torpedoes in their front, and replied, "I trod light when I came out."

Sometimes the firing between the federal and confederate sharpshooters would cease, and there would be some conversation between them. It was, however, specially prohibited, on the part of the latter, by the garrison commander; yet the men were instructed by every means practicable to exaggerate the numbers of the garrison.

Conversation, when it occurred, was generally jocular and sarcastic in its character, and often partook of criticism of the artillery. When a federal addressed a confederate, he called out, "Holloa, Johnny." The confederate answered, "Holloa, Yank." One day, in front of McDermott, a federal soldier had called out to the confederates several times, but got no answer. Finally, in good earnest, he asked why they so refused to answer. The confederate replied, "Because you all insult us so when we talk with you."

Soldiers are proverbial for their wit and good humor, and the confederates were no exception to the rule. They used to say,



"Jeff. Davis will have to rent a piece of land to fight the war out on." They often declared, "We are fighting for our rights in the territories under the Dred Scott decision."

In Spanish fort the artillerists named their heavy guns in honor of the ladies of their officers, with the name in large capitals placarded on the gun as "The Lady Gibson," "The Lady Slocum," "The Lady Maury," &c., &c. The gunners spoke of them by these names instead of No. 1, 2, &c., and were always exceedingly polite and complimentary to them. They also named the federal guns, but called them "Anna Maria," "Sarah Jane," "Elizabeth Ann," &c., &c. And when a federal gun fired, the sentinel would say, "Look out, boys, Anna Maria is going to speak." It would pass down the line, and all knew in advance the direction the shot would come, and get shelter. Then when one of their guns was to be fired, they would say, "Ah, my lads! Look out now for the Lady Slocum; when she speaks the Yanks must hush up and hide."

The effect of some of the shells was fearful. One day a federal mortar shell fell inside the garrison works, plunged through seven feet of earth and logs, and killed four men and wounded three, all of whom were asleep. One of the men was thrown up twenty feet into the air and came down dead, of course, for every bone in him was broken; but he was not at all torn.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### FURTHER OPERATIONS OF LUCAS' CAVALRY—COMBAT OF MOUNT PLEASANT.

ON the morning of April 5, Gen. Lucas moved out from near Blakely with all of his command, except the Thirty-first Massachusetts mounted infantry, taking ten days' half rations, and all the forage the men could carry, to occupy Claiborne, on the Alabama river. The same night he camped at Stockton, and the next morning continued his march. On the forenoon of the 7th, while halting to feed, a freedman came to him, on his way from Gen. Wilson, bearing despatches from that officer to Gen. Canby. He had come down the river, having passed through more than one confederate camp, but had eluded detection. The papers were carefully sewed up in the collar of his vest. Gen. Lucas furnished the faithful man a mule to ride, and sent him on to Gen. Canby, with a guard, under a sergeant.

*Combat of Mount Pleasant.*—From the same bearer of despatches, Lucas learned that a force had recently come up from Mobile and occupied Claiborne; and he resolved to capture it. With that view, he marched till a late hour in the night. Starting at daylight the next morning, April 8th, some delay was soon after experienced in repairing a bridge so as to cross his artillery. At Mount Pleasant, Maj. Ives, with a battalion of the First Louisiana cavalry, had dispersed a detachment of militia. The column halted an hour at that place to feed, and on resuming the march, Maj. Ives kept a quarter of a mile in advance. In course of an hour, while marching along in the wood, where

the ground was swampy, his battalion was met unexpectedly by a sharp volley of musketry, proceeding from a force drawn up in line of battle, but nearly concealed, on the farther side of a piece of low ground. The suddenness of the attack checked the advance, and, for a moment, threw it into confusion; but order was soon restored, and Maj. Ives deployed his small force, answered the fire, yet had to fall back, though slowly. Lucas being near at hand, ordered the remainder of the First Louisiana, under Lieut.-Col. Badger, forward at the gallop, and the rest of the column to follow at a trot. The First Louisiana, having deployed, made a gallant charge on the attacking force. The latter consisted of the Fifteenth confederate cavalry. It was well posted; but the charge was so spirited and well supported that they made but brief resistance, and then gave way. Lucas pursued with vigor for two miles, capturing two battle-flags, three commissioned officers, and sixty men, with many horses and arms. The victory would have been more complete but for the miry nature of the ground. The loss in Lucas' command was confined to the First Louisiana, and consisted of two men killed, and one commissioned officer (Lieut. Boyle) and four men wounded. The casualties of the Fifteenth confederate were reported to be greater. That regiment retired north, moving rapidly through Claiborne. Lucas reached that place at eleven, P. M., and went into camp. While there, his scouts captured several more prisoners, some of whom were officers or agents of importance, and by the 18th, the whole number in his possession was one hundred and fifty. On that day, pursuant to orders from Gen. Canby, he marched for Blakely.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### OPERATIONS OF WILSON'S CAVALRY IN ALABAMA.

WHILE Canby was moving upon Mobile, Thomas caused a diversion to be made in his favor by a column of cavalry under Brevet Maj.-Gen. J. H. Wilson. But the operations of that column included results beyond those of a co-operative character; and they have hardly ever been surpassed, even by the achievements of Alexander.

The condition and purposes of the confederates in Central Alabama show that the flank and rear of Canby's army would have been much harassed but for Wilson's movement. Lieut.-Gen. Taylor, commanding the department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, in some respects, it is true, was in straitened circumstances. He could no longer procure materials nor transportation on credit, and was dependent on the funds derived from the produce loan, cotton being the main article. There were many deserters from his forces;<sup>1</sup> and soon after the fall of Mobile and Selma, he would have accepted colored troops but for a lack of arms.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, there was

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<sup>1</sup> *Capt. Surget (A. A. G.), to Gen. Hodges, March 16.*—Calls his attention to the large number of deserters and absentees, and adds: "Employ the Texas and Arkansas troops in vigorously hunting down all those who fail to comply with the provisions of those orders. Some cases of shooting would have a beneficial effect."

<sup>2</sup> *April 15, 1865.*—Mr. Wm. Lyon, of Demopolis, Ala., who, on behalf of citizens of Marengo and adjoining counties, tenders the military services of negroes, is informed that, although Lieut.-Gen. Taylor has no instructions from Richmond on the subject, he would accept the services of negro troops if he

a respectable force ready for service in the field. And Taylor entertained a hope that he would be able to defeat the federal columns in detail.<sup>1</sup> Forrest, having command of the cavalry, was at West Point, Mississippi. On the 23d of March, Taylor ordered troops to Greenville to resist Steele, who was then thought to be moving on Montgomery.<sup>2</sup> His veteran battalions were directing their steps southeastwardly, when the rattling of Wilson's sabres was heard from the north.<sup>3</sup> Then they paused, and soon wheeled about. Taylor hoped he would be able to overpower this unexpected column; and he promised Maury that when he had accomplished that purpose he would go to his assistance.<sup>4</sup>

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had arms for them. The assistant adjutant-general requests Mr. Lyon to ascertain the number that can be had.

<sup>1</sup> *Lieut.-Gen. Taylor to Gen. R. E. Lee*: "Meridian, March 27. . . . His [enemy's] cavalry, from Florida coast, has struck Montgomery railroad at Evergreen. A raid advancing from North, and another from northeast Alabama, toward Selma and Montgomery. Another threatening Prairie region from Memphis. My intention is to meet and whip these detached columns before they can advance far into the country or unite with each other."

<sup>2</sup> *Capt. Surget to Gen. D. W. Adams, Selma or Montevallo*: "March 23.—Armistead reports enemy moving. Direct Gen. Buford to move at once for Greenville *via* Selma, or point where pontoon is. Assist the movement by sending baggage by rail and steamboat. Forrest will send other troops to concentrate at same point. Communicate with Armistead and dispose troops as movements of enemy may render advisable. Push forward completion of the pontoon near Selma."

*Capt. Surget to Gen. D. W. Adams*: "March 25.—Greenville is the point toward which all troops be pushed rapidly as possible."

*Same to Same*.—"Chalmers' and Jackson's divisions are ordered *via* Finche's ferry to Selma."

*Taylor to Gen. D. W. Adams, Montevallo*: "West Point, Miss., March 25.—Troops are being pushed forward to Selma to meet raid from below. Use every exertion to prevent them cutting road to Pollard and Columbus."

<sup>3</sup> *Taylor to Forrest*: "March 27.—Gens. Adams and Roddy are still of opinion that it is a large and well-equipped cavalry force moving from above."

<sup>4</sup> *To Gen. Maury*: "March 28.—The Lieutenant-General hopes in three or four days to whip the large raid moving from north, and then will be in condition to assist you."

*Organization of Wilson's Cavalry.*—For several weeks previous to the campaign, the cavalry corps of the military division of the Mississippi, numbering twenty-two thousand, had been in camp on the north bank of the Tennessee, at Gravelly Springs and Waterloo. The surface of the country is there rolling; the soil rocky. The men had comfortable quarters, the horses good shelter, and supplies were furnished in abundance. The fault in the cavalry system had previously been overwork in detachments, and the absence of instruction and uniformity of equipment. Gen. Wilson instituted a thorough system of instruction, and every necessary effort was made to bring the corps to the highest possible state of efficiency. The troops were drilled in the double-rank formation. Wilson discovers the true genius of a soldier when he says that the future victories of the corps were “won by patient industry and instruction while in the cantonments of Gravelly Springs and Waterloo.”

Early in February, Knipe's division, numbering five thousand, was sent round by water to Canby, leaving under Wilson's immediate command seventeen thousand men, requiring about five thousand horses for a complete remount. The lack of horses compelled him, reluctantly, to leave Hatch's division at Eastport, and the divisions assigned for the march, were the First, Second, and Fourth, commanded, respectively, by McCook, Long, and Upton; comprising, in all, a little over twelve thousand mounted men. The dismounted men of the three divisions, numbering fifteen hundred, were designated as escort for the supply train; were organized into battalions, and commanded by Maj. Archer.

The division commanders were directed to see that every trooper was provided with five days' light rations in haversacks, twenty-four pounds of grain, one hundred rounds of ammunition, and one pair of extra horseshoes for his horse; that the pack-animals were loaded with five days' rations of hard-bread,



ten of sugar, coffee, and salt; and the wagons with forty-five days' rations of coffee, twenty of sugar, fifteen of salt, and eighty rounds of ammunition. This allowance was prescribed on the basis of a sixty days' campaign, and under the supposition that the command would be able to supply itself from the country through which it marched, with everything else in abundance. Only enough hard-bread was taken to last through the sterile region of North Alabama.

The supply and baggage train numbered about two hundred and fifty wagons, and was under the charge of Captain W. E. Brown, acting chief quartermaster.

In addition, there was a light canvas pontoon train of thirty boats, transported by fifty six-mule wagons, and in charge of a battalion of the Twelfth Missouri cavalry, Maj. J. M. Hubbard commanding.<sup>1</sup>

Wilson's instructions from Lieut.-Gen. Grant, allowed him the amplest discretion, as an independent commander.

*The March.*—As the rains had retarded Canby's columns, so the overflow of the Tennessee delayed Wilson; and it turned out that there was a happy concurrence in their movements. Wilson commenced crossing the Tennessee on the 18th of March; and at daylight of the 22d, the order of march having been designated, the movement began from Chickasaw. The scanty condition of the country, and the purpose of creating doubt in the mind of the enemy as to the real object of the column, rendered it prudent that it should move on diverging routes.

Upton's division, followed by his train, marched rapidly by the most easterly route, passing Barton's station, Russellville,

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<sup>1</sup> Here, and in many of the following pages, I borrow largely from the report of Brevet Maj.-Gen. J. H. Wilson, dated Macon, Georgia, June 29, 1865.

Mount Hope, and Jasper, to Sanders' ferry, on the west fork of the Black Warrior river.

Long's division marched by the way of Cherokee station and Frankfort; but being encumbered by the pontoon train, and having mistaken the road by which it should have ascended the mountain, was considerably delayed in reaching Russellville. Thence it marched south, by the Tuscaloosa road, till it crossed Upper Bear creek; then turned to the eastward, by the head of Buttahatchie creek, crossed Byler's road near Thorn hill, and struck Blackwater creek about twenty-five miles from Jasper. The crossing of the last-mentioned stream, and the road for six miles beyond, were as bad as could be, but, by industry, everything was got through to Jasper, and the ford on the Warrior, with but little loss of time.

McCook's division pursued the same route to Bear creek on the Tuscaloosa road, but instead of turning to the eastward at that place, continued the march toward Tuscaloosa as far as Eldridge, and thence east to Jasper.

In this order the whole command arrived at and crossed the Black Warrior river.

The ford on the west branch was extremely difficult of approach as well as of passage. The country on both sides, very rugged and six or seven hundred feet above the bed of the stream, was entirely destitute of forage; the stream itself was at the time likely to become entirely impassable by the rain which threatened to occur at any moment. Wilson, therefore, having heard at Jasper, on the 27th, that a part of Forrest's force under Chalmers, was marching by way of Bridgeville toward Tuscaloosa, and apprehending that the balance of Forrest's force might be sent in the same direction, directed his division commanders to replenish the haversack, to see that the pack animals were fully laden, to leave all the wagons, except the artillery, and march with the greatest possible



rapidity, *via* Elyton to Montevallo. He felt confident the enemy would endeavor to check his movement with the hope of destroying the supply train. So he left it between the two streams, with instructions to have it pushed on as far as Elyton, where it would receive further orders. In crossing the two branches of the Warrior each division lost a few horses, but no men.

While at Elyton, on the evening of the 30th, Wilson directed McCook to detach Croxton's brigade, with orders to move on Tuscaloosa as rapidly as possible, burn the public stores, military college, bridges, foundries, and factories there, return toward the main column by the way of Centerville road, and rejoin it at or in the vicinity of Selma. Besides covering the trains and inflicting a heavy blow on the enemy, Wilson hoped by that detachment to develop any movement intended to intercept his main column. The achievements and hazards of Croxton's brigade will be related hereafter.

On the 28th, Forrest was moving from West Point *via* Finche's ferry; and the same day he learned that Gen. Dan. Adams' scouts from Montevallo reported the federals moving on Tuscaloosa with a force estimated at five thousand. On that day, also, he was informed that Gen. Adams reported that three divisions under Wilson camped at Jasper the night of the 26th, and that their destination was Elyton and Montevallo. On the 28th, the Kentucky brigade was put in motion to strike the federal rear from Tuscaloosa. On the 29th, orders were again sent to Gen. W. L. Brandon to send twenty-five hundred Mississippi reserves from Scooba to West Point.

*Skirmishes near Montevallo.*—Gen. Upton's division in the advance encountered a small mounted force at Elyton, but pushed it rapidly across the Cahawba to Montevallo. The enemy having felled trees into the ford and otherwise obstructed it, the railroad bridge near Hillsborough was floored over by



Gen. E. F. Winslow's brigade. Upton crossed his division and pushed on to Montevallo, where he arrived late in the evening of the 30th. Winslow's brigade had a slight skirmish just before entering Montevallo, which was participated in by three companies of the Fourth Iowa, under Maj. W. W. Woods, and one man of the Fourth Iowa was slightly wounded. Long and McCook marched by the same route. In that region Upton's division destroyed the Red Mountain, Central, Bibb, and Columbiana iron-works, Cahawba rolling mills, five collieries, and much valuable property; all of which were in full operation. Wilson arrived at Montevallo, on the afternoon of March 31, where he found Upton's division ready to resume the march. Directly after, the confederates made their appearance on the Selma road, pushing in the federal pickets. By Gen. Wilson's direction, Upton moved his division out at once, Gen. A. J. Alexander's brigade being in advance. After a sharp fight and handsome charge, by the Fifth Iowa cavalry, Col. J. M. Young commanding, Alexander's brigade drove the confederate cavalry, a part of Crossland's Kentucky brigade, and Roddy's division, rapidly and in confusion toward Randolph. On their seeking to make a stand at Six-Mile creek, south of Montevallo, Upton caused Rodney's battery (I, Fourth United States artillery) to take position and open fire, and pushed Winslow's brigade to the front. The Tenth Missouri cavalry, Lieut. Col. F. W. Ben-teen commanding, dismounted and forced the confederates from their position, the Tenth suffering a loss of two men wounded. While that regiment was mounting, the Third Iowa cavalry, Col. J. W. Noble commanding, took the advance and charged the confederates with one company at a time on the road when their column was in retreat. A portion of the confederates being separated from their main force, Capt. Johnson, of the Third, with two companies, was sent to the right and charging with vigor and gallantry, captured a number. On the main

road, the confederates were driven to Randolph, leaving many animals and men along the road. Winslow's brigade took seventy-five prisoners. The Third Iowa behaved with its habitual gallantry. It was led by Col. Noble, whose adjutant lost his horse in the first charge. Meantime, the enemy being familiar with the ground attacked the rear and right of Winslow's brigade, when Lieut.-Col. Peters, commanding the Fourth Iowa, dismounted seven companies of that regiment, charged the enemy, driving him about two miles, killing and wounding several and capturing two. The loss of the Fourth was three severely, and two slightly wounded. The gallantry of men and officers had been conspicuous throughout the day, and much increased the moral supremacy of the corps.

Upton's division bivouacked that night fourteen miles south of Montevallo, and at dawn the next day, April 1, moved forward to Randolph. At that point, in pursuance of the order of march for the day, Gen. Upton turned to the east, for the purpose of going by the way of Old Maplesville, and thence by the Old Selma road, while Gen. Long was instructed to push forward on the new road.

*Capture of Despatches.*—At Randolph, Upton's scouts captured a confederate courier just from Centreville, from whose person were taken two despatches, one from Brig.-Gen. W. H. Jackson, commanding one of Forrest's divisions, and one from Major Anderson, Forrest's chief of staff. From the first Wilson learned that Forrest, with a part of his command, was in his front—which had also been learned from prisoners—that Jackson with his division, and all the wagons and artillery of the confederate cavalry, marching from Tuscaloosa, *via* Trion toward Centreville, had encamped the night before at Hill's plantation, three miles beyond Scottsboro; that Croxton, with the brigade detached at Elyton, had struck Jackson's rear guard at Trion and interposed himself between it and the train;



that Jackson had discovered this, and intended to attack Croxton at daylight, April 1. He learned from the other despatch that Chalmers had also arrived at Marion, Alabama, and had been ordered to cross to the east side of the Cahawba, near that place, for the purpose of joining Forrest in Wilson's front, or in the works at Selma. He also learned that a force of dismounted men were stationed at Centreville, with orders to hold the bridge over the Cahawba as long as possible, and in no event to let it fall into the hands of the federals.

Shortly after the interception of these despatches Wilson received a despatch from Croxton, written from Trion, the night before, stating he had struck Jackson's rear; and instead of pushing on toward Tuscaloosa, as he was ordered, he would follow and endeavor to bring him to an engagement, hoping, thereby to prevent his junction with Forrest.

Having this information, Wilson directed McCook to strengthen the battalion previously ordered to Centreville, by a regiment and to follow at once with La Grange's entire brigade, leaving all pack-trains and wagons with the main column, so that he could march with the utmost celerity; and after seizing the Centreville bridge, and leaving it under protection of a sufficient guard, to cross the Cahawba, and continue his march by the Scottsville road toward Trion. His orders were to attack and break up Jackson's forces, form a junction with Croxton, if practicable, and rejoin the corps, with his entire division, by the Centreville-road to Selma. Although McCook did not leave Randolph till near eleven, A. M., and the distance to Scottsville was nearly forty miles, Wilson hoped, by the movement to do more than secure the Centreville bridge, and prevent Jackson from joining the force in front of the main column.



## BATTLE OF EBENEZER CHURCH.

Having anticipated Forrest, in his characteristic plan of getting upon the rear of his adversary, Wilson directed Long and Upton to allow him no rest, but push him toward Selma with the utmost rapidity. Those officers comprehended the situation, and pressed forward, with zeal and activity, on the roads that have been indicated. The advance of both divisions encountered small parties of confederates, but drove them back to their main force at Ebenezer church, six miles north of Plantersville. Forrest had chosen a position on the north bank of Bogler's creek, and disposed of his force for battle, his right resting on Mulberry creek, and his left on a high wooded ridge, with four pieces of artillery to sweep the Randolph road, upon which Long's division was advancing, and two on the Maplesville road. He had under his command, in line, Armstrong's brigade of Chalmers' division; Roddy's division; Crossland's Kentucky brigade; and a battalion of three hundred infantry, just arrived from Selma; in all, about five thousand men. Part of his front was covered by a slashing of pine trees and rail barricades.

Gen. Long, on discovering the confederates in strength close upon the main body, reinforced his advance guard (a battalion of the Seventy-second Indiana mounted infantry) by the balance of the regiment, dismounted, and formed it on the left of the road. As it moved forward, the confederate advance fell back. At that juncture, he ordered forward four companies of the Seventeenth Indiana mounted infantry, Lieut.-Col. Frank White commanding. With drawn sabres, that gallant battalion drove the enemy, in confusion, into the main line, dashed against that, broke through it, rode over the artillery, and, finally, turned to the left, and cut its way out, leaving one officer and sixteen men in the hands of the confederates, either killed or wounded. In

this charge, Capt. Taylor, of the Seventeenth Indiana, lost his life, after having led his men into the very midst of the enemy, and engaged in a running fight, of two hundred yards, with Forrest in person.

While this was transpiring, Upton's division was coming from a northeasterly direction on the Maplesville road. Alexander's brigade was in the advance, and hearing the firing and cheers of Long's men on the right, when within three miles of Ebenezer church, pushed forward at the trot, and soon came to the scene of action. Alexander promptly deployed his brigade mostly on the right of the road, intending to connect with Long's left, and soon afterward advanced his line dismounted. In less than an hour, although the resistance was determined, the position was carried by a gallant charge, and the confederates routed. Gen. Alexander's brigade captured two guns and about two hundred prisoners, while one gun fell into the hands of Gen. Long's division.

Winslow's brigade came up just as the engagement was being decided; and two regiments, the Third Iowa leading, were hastened to the front. Capt. Arnim's Company I of the Third was thrown out on the left of the road, and directed to charge a line formed on the bank of the creek four hundred yards from the head of Winslow's column. That company, having to throw down a fence under severe fire, had one officer, Lieut. J. J. Veach, and several men wounded, losing also about fifteen horses. The column moving forward the last of Forrest's forces retired, and the Third Iowa cavalry pursued them five miles to Plantersville. Capt. John Brown's Company L charged over a deep stream, captured a color company, and, indeed, more men than his command numbered.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### CAVALRY OPERATIONS CONTINUED.—BATTLE OF SELMA.

THE night of April 1, Wilson's corps bivouacked near Plantersville, nineteen miles from Selma. With almost constant fighting, it had driven its adversaries twenty-four miles since morning. It gave them no pause nor rest. At daylight of the 2d, Long's division took the advance, closely followed by Upton's. Wilson, having paid heed to that important injunction of Napoleon—to be informed of the condition of the enemy—had obtained a well-drawn sketch, and complete description of the defences of Selma.

That city is situated on the north bank of the Alabama river, about one hundred feet above high water. It contained an arsenal and foundries, and was the most important confederate depot of the southwest.

Its *fortifications* consisted of a bastioned line on a radius of nearly three miles, extending from the Alabama river below to the same above the city. That part of the line west of the city was covered with a miry, deep, and almost impassable creek, with sloping banks; that on the east side, by a swamp, extending from the river almost to the Summerville road, and entirely impracticable for mounted men at all times. On the east side also is a stream with high and precipitous banks. The profile of the works was as follows: Height of parapet, six to eight feet; thickness, eight feet; depth of ditch, five feet; width, from ten to fifteen feet; height of stockade on the glacis, five feet; sunk in the earth, four feet. The place was indeed



# NOTES

21 Arsenal

2 Nitro Works

3 Stockade Prison

4 Naval Foundry

5 C.S.A. Foundry Shot

Shell & Machinery

6 do. do. Castings

7 do. do. R.R. Car

Wheels & c.

8 do. Ware House

9 do. do. Cotton

10 R.R. Repairing & Machine Shop

11 Powder Mill

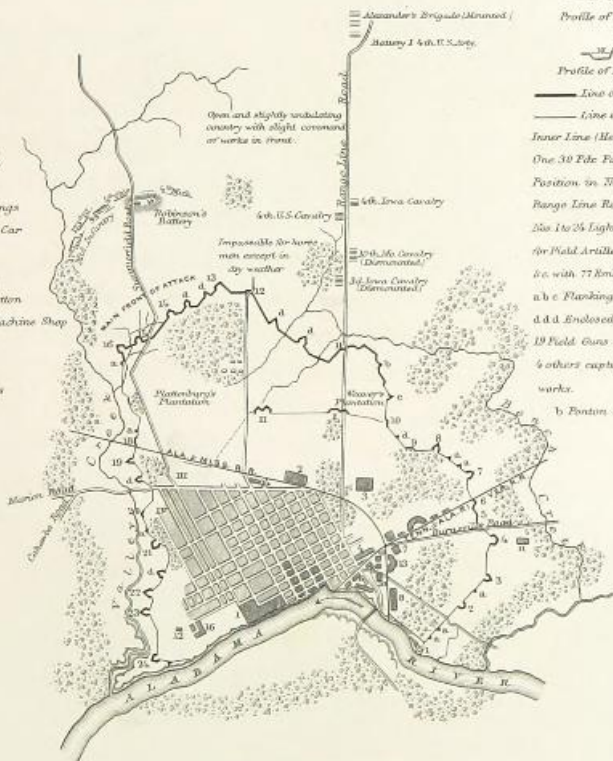
12 do. Magazine

13 R.R. Engine Houses

15 R.R. Depots

15 Coal Sheds

16 Barracks



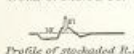
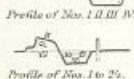
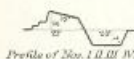
## MAP OF THE CITY OF SELMA AND ITS DEFENCES ALABAMA

Captured by Assault by the Cavalry Corps M.D.M.

April 24. 1865

Bvt. Maj. Genl. J.H. WILSON Comdg.

Scale 1 Mile



Line of continuous parapet.  
Line of stockaded R.P.  
Inner Line (Heavy Works) unfinished.  
One 30 Tde Parrot captured in Position in No 1 commanding Range Line Road.  
250 1st 25 Light Works on outer Line for Field Artillery Batteries Railers &c. with 77 Embarcadero.  
a b c Flanking Redans &c.  
d d d Enclosed Positions for Riflemen.  
19 Field Guns captured in Position & others captured just outside of works.  
b Ponton Bridge.



strongly and elaborately fortified, and the stockade in front of the ditch was no inconsiderable obstruction.

Wilson directed Long to march by the flanks of brigades, approach the city, and cross to the Summerville road, without exposing his men, and to develop his line as soon as he should arrive in front of the works. Upton was directed to move on the Range Line road, sending a squadron on the Burnsville road. Lieut. Rendelbrook, with a battalion of the Fourth United States cavalry, was instructed to move down the railroad, burning stations, bridges, and trestle-work, as far as Burnsville. By rapid marching, without opposition, the troops were all in sight of the town, and mostly in position, by four, P. M.

Lieut.-Gen. Taylor left the city at about that hour, leaving Forrest in command, who had under him a garrison numbering nearly seven thousand, including the citizen militia. Preachers of the gospel took muskets and went into the trenches.

#### ASSAULT.

As Gen. Wilson approached the city he perceived that the information he had received was generally correct. He then made a reconnoissance of the works from left to right, for the purpose of satisfying himself as to the true point of attack, and the probable chances of success. He directed Gen. Long to assault the works by moving diagonally across the road upon which his troops were posted, while Gen. Upton, at his own request, with a picked force of three hundred men, was directed to penetrate the swamps upon his left, break through the line covered by it, and turn the garrison's right, the balance of his division to conform to the movement. The signal for the advance was to be the discharge of a single gun from Rodney's battery, to be given as soon as Upton's turning movement had developed itself.



Before that plan could be executed, and while waiting for the signal to advance, Gen. Long was informed that a strong force of confederate cavalry had begun skirmishing with his rear, and threatened a general attack upon his pack train and led horses. He had left a force of six companies well posted at the creek, in anticipation of that movement, afterward ascertained to have been made by Chalmers, in obedience to the instructions of Forrest. This force was at Marion the day before, and was expected on the road from that place. Fearing, lest the affair might compromise the assault upon the main position, Long (having strengthened the rear by another regiment), determined to make the assault at once, and without waiting for the signal, gave the order to advance. His command was formed in line of battle dismounted, the Seventeenth Indiana mounted infantry on the right, and next, from right to left, the One Hundred and Twenty-third Illinois and Ninety-eighth Illinois mounted infantry, the Fourth Ohio cavalry, and Fourth Michigan cavalry, comprising in all fifteen hundred officers and men. They had to charge across open ground six hundred yards to the works, exposed to the fire of artillery and musketry, and that part of the line they were to assault was manned by Armstrong's brigade, regarded as the best of Forrest's corps, and numbering fifteen hundred strong. Long's division sprang forward in an unfaltering manner. Its flanks had some difficulty in crossing a ravine and marshy soil; but in less than fifteen minutes it had swept over the works and driven the confederates in confusion toward the city. But the loss was considerable, and among the wounded was Gen. Long himself, who was temporarily succeeded in command by Col. Minty. Wilson arrived on that part of the field just after the works were carried. He at once notified Upton of the success, directed Col. Minty to form Long's division for a new advance, ordered Col. Vail, commanding the Seventeenth

Indiana, to place his own regiment and the Fourth United States cavalry, Lieut. O'Connel, and the Board of Trade battery, Capt. Robinson commanding, and renewed the attack. The garrison had occupied a new line, but partially finished, on the edge of the city. A gallant charge by the Fourth United States cavalry was repulsed, but it rapidly re-formed on the left. It was now quite dark. Upton's division advancing at the same time, a new charge was made by the Fourth Ohio, Seventeenth Indiana, and Fourth cavalry, dismounted. The troops, inspired by the wildest enthusiasm, swept everything before them, and penetrated the city in all directions. Upton's division, though encountering less resistance, charged with its habitual spirit and devotion. It was said that the men, finding it too difficult to break down or pry away the sharp-pointed stockade in front of the earthworks, those behind, coming on swiftly, jumped on the shoulders of the foremost and leaped the obstructions, thus storming the works by a game of "leap-frog."<sup>1</sup> Nor was such a humorous expedient inconsistent with the coolness and fervid valor of those splendid troops.

During the first part of the action, the Chicago Board of Trade battery had occupied a commanding position, and steadily replied to the garrison guns.

The loss in Long's division was forty killed and two hundred and sixty wounded. Of the latter, besides Long, were Cols. Miller, McCormick, and Briggs. Wilson's force, engaged and in supporting distance, was nine thousand men and eight guns.

The garrison fought with considerable coolness and skill. Forrest was reported to have been engaged personally in two or three romantic combats; and he, with Gens. Armstrong, Roddy, and Adams, and a number of men, escaped under cover of darkness, by the Burnsville or river road. A portion of

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<sup>1</sup> Ingersoll's *Iowa and the Rebellion*, p. 465.



Upton's division pursued on the Burnsville road until long after midnight, capturing four guns and many prisoners.

The immediate fruits of Wilson's victory were thirty-one field guns and one thirty-pounder Parrott; two thousand seven hundred prisoners, including one hundred and fifty officers; a number of colors, and large quantities of stores of every kind.

As soon as the troops could be assembled and got into camp, Brevet Brig.-Gen. Winslow was assigned to the command of the city, with orders to destroy everything that could benefit the confederate cause. In the excitement of the hour, some acts of plunder were committed.

Gen. Upton was directed to march at daylight with his division, for the purpose of driving Chalmers to the west side of the Catawba, to open communication with McCook, who was expected from Centreville, and to assist him in bringing in the train.

In anticipation of the fall of Selma the confederates burned twenty-five thousand bales of cotton, sent the steamers that were there, down the Alabama, to go up the Tombigbee, and cut loose a pontoon bridge which floated down to Oven bluff.

Gen. Wilson directed Lieut. Haywood, Fourth Michigan cavalry, engineer officer on his staff, to employ all the resources of the shops in the city in the construction of pontoons, with the intention of laying a bridge and crossing to the south side of the Alabama river, as soon as he could satisfy himself of Gen. Canby's success in the operations against Mobile. On April 5, Upton and McCook arrived with the train, but nothing definite had been heard of Croxton. McCook had been entirely successful in his operations against Centreville, but on reaching Scottsboro, he found Jackson well posted with a force, he thought too strong to attack. After a sharp skirmish<sup>1</sup> he

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<sup>1</sup> *Capt. Surget (A. A. G.), to Maj. Hope, Demopolis: "April 3.—If news of Jackson's victory be true, he ought to cover Demopolis."*



returned to Centreville, burned the Scottsboro cotton factory and Cahawba bridge, and returned toward Selma. Meantime, Col. Noble, Third Iowa, with a detachment of Winslow's brigade, made a march to the rear through Summerfield to Johnson's ferry, returning on the 6th.

On the 3d, Gen. Wirt Adams, at West Point, was ordered to prepare immediately to move east *via* Pickensville with every available man of his own and Scott's Louisiana brigade, leaving the battery behind. On the 4th, Lieut.-Gen. Taylor was at Mobile. On the same day, Capt. Surget telegraphed from Meridian to Gen. Hodge at Jackson, that there were some eighty federal prisoners there, recent captures. On the 5th, Taylor returned from Mobile, and at one, P. M., telegraphed Forrest as follows :

"Returned from Mobile this morning. Wirt Adams left Columbus this morning with fifteen hundred men to join you at Marion *via* Pickensville. . . . . 'Tis useless to fight enemy until we are strong enough to whip him. Hang on his flanks and rear, cut off small parties and delay his movements till you can get your whole force in hand."

The same day Capt. Surget informed Forrest—"At Mobile everything goes on well. Yankees have gained nothing thus far."

On the 6th of April, Gen. Wilson having ordered Maj. Hubbard to lay a bridge over the Alabama with the utmost despatch, went to Cahawba to see Gen. Forrest, who had agreed to meet Wilson there, under a flag of truce, to arrange an exchange of prisoners. Wilson soon discovered that he need not expect liberality in the matter, and that Forrest hoped to recapture the prisoners in his hands. During the conversation, Wilson learned from Forrest that Croxton had had an engagement with Wirt Adams, near Bridgeville, forty miles southwest of Tuscaloosa, two days before. This, it appears, assured Wilson of

Croxtton's success and safety, and he determined to lose no time in crossing to the south side of the Alabama. Returning to Selma he urged every one to the utmost exertions. The river was quite full and rising, its current swift and strong. The weather was also unsettled and rainy, but by great energy and labor night and day the bridge, eight hundred and seventy feet long, was constructed, and the command all crossed by daylight of the 10th. Three times the bridge was swept away. Gen. Alexander narrowly escaped drowning; boats were capsized, and men precipitated into the stream, but the crossing was finally accomplished with success.

Behind him, in the destroyed arsenal, foundries, arms, stores, and military munitions of every kind, Wilson had left immense ruin. He had struck the Confederacy a disastrous blow.

At Selma, he left the severely wounded of his command, and many paroled prisoners. But the confederates considered the parole illegal, and ordered the men to duty.

Wilson now determined to march, by the way of Montgomery, into Georgia, and, after breaking up railroads, and destroying stores and army supplies in that state, to march thence, as rapidly as possible, to the theatre of operations in North Carolina and Virginia.

He was now able to secure greater mobility to his command. Enough horses had been captured to mount all the dismounted men. The surplus wagons, and all of the bridge train, except enough for twelve bags, were destroyed. The column was cleared of the multitude of freedmen who hovered around it, except such able-bodied ones as could enlist, who were organized into regiments, one to each division. Efficient officers were assigned these commands; and how well they succeeded, is shown by the fact, that "in addition to subsisting themselves upon the country, they marched (upon one occasion) forty-five miles, and frequently as much as thirty-five, in one day."

In the march from Selma, La Grange's brigade, of McCook's division, was given the advance. The recent rains had rendered the roads quite muddy, and a small body of confederate cavalry, in falling back before La Grange, destroyed several bridges, so that the progress of the column was slow.

On the morning of the 12th, the advance-guard reached Montgomery, the capital of Alabama, and received the surrender of the city from the mayor and council. The confederate general, Adams, with a small force, after falling back from before Wilson's column, to the city, burned ninety thousand bales of cotton, stored there, and continued his retreat to Mount Meigs, on the Columbus road.

Gen. McCook assigned Col. Cooper, Fourth Kentucky cavalry, to the command of the city, and immediately began the destruction of the public stores. Maj. Weston of the Fourth Kentucky, with a small detachment of his regiment, made a rapid march toward Wetumpka, swam the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers, and captured five steamboats and their cargoes, which were taken to Montgomery and destroyed.

The grand column entered Montgomery in imposing style. The capitol stands on a commanding site, and is visible far out in the country. As they approached the city the troopers were delighted to see the federal flag restored to its position, and proudly floating from the dome of the first capitol of the then tottering confederacy.

Pausing two days at Montgomery, Wilson resumed his march on the morning of the 14th, moving into Georgia and accomplishing brilliant results; the most important of which was the capture, on the 16th of April, of the fortified posts of Columbus and West Point. On the 20th, he entered Macon, where he was met by news of the armistice.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### OPERATIONS OF CROXTON'S BRIGADE.

GEN. John T. Croxton's brigade consisted of the Second Michigan cavalry, Col. Johnston, the Fourth Kentucky mounted infantry, Col. Kelly, the Sixth Kentucky cavalry, Maj. Fidler, and the Eighth Iowa cavalry, Col. Dorr, fifteen hundred effective.

Leaving the Fourth Kentucky cavalry temporarily with the train, Croxton, on the morning of March 31, marched from Elyton for Tuscaloosa, having eleven hundred effective men. He took no artillery nor train, save one headquarters baggage-wagon, three ambulances, and the allowance of pack mules. The men had each about one hundred and twenty rounds of ammunition, and, like the main column, were armed with Spencer carbines.

At five, P. M., when approaching Trion, some twenty miles from Tuscaloosa, and while ascending a rise of ground, in a wooded and broken country, the advance detected indications of the enemy, which proved to be the rear of Gen. W. H. Jackson's division, estimated at twenty-six hundred, and having artillery. Croxton's brigade deployed in line near the top of the hill, with videttes on the crest, and having remained in that position till dark, went into camp off the road. Meantime, thorough scouting on the flanks, showed hostile forces on Croxton's left and left rear.

*Skirmish at Trion.*—At daylight the next morning, April 1, Croxton, in order to elude Jackson, though still having Tuscaloosa in view, turned, by an unfrequented road, in a northeasterly direction, to the Dirt creek road, and marched rapidly for

ten or fifteen miles. Jackson, however, made a sharp attack before the brigade was all out of camp, the Sixth Kentucky cavalry losing some thirty men, including a lieutenant, captured. A scouting party, of the Eighth Iowa, was cut off, all of whom, except one, killed, made their way to Gen. Wilson.

Gen. Jackson addressed a despatch to the commanding officer at Tuscaloosa, informing him that he had attacked and dispersed Croxton's force ; adding : " It is scattered in the mountains, and cannot again be collected. Assure the fair ladies of Tuscaloosa, that the tread of the Vandal hordes shall not pollute the streets of their beautiful city."

Croxton marched that day about forty miles, striking the Black Warrior river at Johnson's ferry. The Fourth Kentucky joined him at noon. The same night he crossed the Black Warrior. The stream was high and rapid ; and the men resorted to various plans to get across. The forty miles' march—and some had been on duty the previous night—had made them tired and stiff, but they addressed themselves to the duty of crossing the swollen river with cheerful alacrity. A small flat-boat was used, but it would have required much time for the whole brigade to cross in that. Some attempting, while mounted, to swim their horses, were carried under by the current. Others, to be odd, stripped to their shirts, and were piloted across, holding to their horses' tails ; a scene which occasioned no little merriment. A few horses were lost in crossing.

The brigade marched thirty-two miles the next day, and at ten, p. m., arrived before Tuscaloosa, but on the opposite side of the river. The bridge was refloored, and Col. Johnston, of the Second Michigan cavalry, with one hundred and fifty officers and men of his regiment, crossed the bridge, surprised the guards, and captured the pieces of artillery. The Eighth Iowa entered about the same time, and Col. Dorr received



formal surrender of the town at one, A. M. Upward of fifty prisoners were captured and paroled. After daylight, Croxton caused the military college, the public works and stores, to be destroyed. He remained there till the 5th, trying to communicate with Wilson or McCook. The confederate scouts were hanging around Tuscaloosa, and, knowing that Jackson and Chalmers were between him and Selma, he thought it too hazardous to undertake to reach that place by way of Centreville. He therefore decided to move toward Eutaw, in the hope of crossing the Warrior lower down, and cutting the railroad between Selma and Demopolis. On the 5th, he re-crossed the Black Warrior, burned the bridge, marched out on the Columbus (Mississippi) road, and, on the 6th, turned toward Eutaw. The same morning, at seven o'clock, Gen. Wirt Adams, with fifteen hundred men, left Pickensville, intending to join Forrest at Marion, by the way of Finche's ferry. Croxton, at the time, thought his force was larger.

*Combat of Pleasant Ridge.*—About two, P. M., Adams' men began to annoy the rear of Croxton's brigade, consisting of the Sixth Kentucky cavalry, near Pleasant Ridge. Meantime, Croxton had re-crossed the Sipsa river, and turned on the military road toward Tuscaloosa. In front of the Sixth Kentucky were the two ambulances and the wagon, and next in front of them was the Second Michigan. At about five, P. M., Adams charged the rear with much vigor, the shock falling entirely on the Sixth Kentucky cavalry. The commanding officer, Maj. Fidler, sent forward to Col. Johnston that he was hard pushed, and needed help, but before the message could be delivered, he himself and nearly a third of his regiment were captured or disabled. One of the ambulances was captured at the same time, in which was Croxton's valise.

The Second Michigan cavalry halted and formed, facing to the rear, partly behind a little ridge with bushes on both sides



of the road, a portion of the line being dismounted. In their rear was a house, and farther back a hill and woods. In their front was a field extending one hundred yards, and beyond that a body of timber. Heavy rain was falling, accompanied with thunder and lightning; yet it was a cold rain, and everything around was dreary. The ground was muddy, night was coming on, and it was believed a superior force would soon be hurled against them. Soon the Sixth Kentucky cavalry came hurrying up in some disorder, and the Second Michigan made an opening for them to pass through. All the column except the Second Michigan marched on. Adams' forces, encouraged with their success, charged, mounted, against the Second Michigan, fully expecting to rout them. But the latter, reserving their fire till they were within short range, repulsed them. Then the confederates retired out of sight, dismounted, and charged again. But again the Second Michigan men held their position like statues, and drove them back with heavier loss. Adams' men charged repeatedly in a heroic manner, and as often were repulsed. Their rallying cries, and the exhortations by their officers, could be plainly heard. One was heard to say, "The d—d Yankee cowards won't fight—they'll run!" This only increased the sullen feelings of the Second Michigan men. Their line never wavered. Their own safety, probably the safety of the brigade, was secured by their firm courage and their unerring aim. Finally, at dark, Adams ceased his attack. His loss must have been severe.<sup>1</sup> The Second Michigan cavalry

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<sup>1</sup> "We have reliable information that Gen. Wirt Adams, with comparatively small force, met the enemy under Croxton, about two thousand five hundred strong, at Pleasant Ridge, Alabama, and whipped them badly, killing thirteen men, and capturing and wounding a large number, as well as taking all their *artillery, wagons, ambulances, pontoons*, and all of Gen. Croxton's papers. Gen. Adams lost about three hundred men. Capt. W. B. Lockett, of Wood's regiment, was killed in the engagement. The enemy *outnumbered* Adams at least two to one."—*Jackson (Miss.) News*.

suffered but little, having only three men wounded. Col. Johnston had his horse killed under him. The regiment then marched on, and at twelve o'clock overtook the rest of the brigade in camp.

On the 7th, Croxton went into camp near Northport, a few miles from Tuscaloosa. His foraging parties and scouts on the road to Columbus misled Wirt Adams' men, who, on that evening, reported him moving toward Columbus. Adams then turned his column in that direction, and arrived there at one, P. M., on the 8th, having marched forty-five miles in eleven hours.<sup>1</sup> This put him about seventy miles northwest from Croxton. Chalmers was moving toward Columbus the same time, and reached there the 9th.

On the 11th, Croxton was still in camp near Northport on the Boiler road, and picketing three miles out toward Columbus.<sup>2</sup> The same day he sent four hundred freedmen toward Decatur. On the morning of the 12th, he marched northward; and passing on through Jasper, recrossed the west fork of the Black Warrior river at Hadley's mill, marched nearly due east by the way of Mount Penson and Trussville, crossed the Coosa at True's and Collins' ferries, and continued on to Talladega, a region opulent in mineral resources. The numerous streams they crossed were much raised by the spring freshet. The men with their horses had to swim them, incurring, in some instances, no little peril. A few men were drowned. The arms, saddles,

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<sup>1</sup> *Gen. Wirt Adams to Capt. E. Surget, A. A. G.*: "Columbus, April 8.—The Yankee column which was attacked and driven toward Tuscaloosa on the 6th, was reported by my scouts last night as making forced marches on Columbus. I marched my command forty-five miles in eleven hours, reaching there at one, P. M., to-day. No reliable intelligence of his approach thus far."

<sup>2</sup> *Lieut.-Col. Wm. Martin to Capt. Surget*: "Tuscaloosa, 5 P. M., April 11.—A prisoner states that they (Croxton's force) would cross at or about this place, and move in direction of Selma. One thousand men could take them all. I have despatched Gen. Adams."



and accoutrements, were generally ferried over in canoes, flats, or even *sugar-troughs*.

On the 22d of April, the Eighth Iowa, being in advance, charged into Talladega, with drawn sabres, against Gen. B. H. Hill's brigade, and put that force to route, losing two men, captured, and having one wounded by a sabre-cut. The two captured men were taken by a squad of thirteen confederates; but Lieut. Bennett, of the Eighth, with only two men, charged and scattered them, and rescued the two prisoners.

At Talladega, Croxton replenished the haversacks, and, on the 23d, pushed on, northeasterly, destroying the railroad, and skirmishing with Hill, who had artillery, and was falling back on Jacksonville. The Second Michigan cavalry was in the advance, but could not bring Hill's forces to an engagement, except with the advance guard. That regiment had one man killed, of Company B, near Oxford, and a detail having gone back to bury him, found too many confederates gathering to render their stay safe. The Eighth Iowa, in the rear had two men killed.

In the region of the Blue mountains, Croxton's command destroyed valuable iron and nitre works, besides railroad bridges, depots, and rolling stock.

On the 24th, the Eighth Iowa cavalry was detached and sent to Jacksonville, and, on the way, had lively skirmishes. Before reaching that place, a freedman informed the commander of the Eighth, that Hill's forces were in line in Jacksonville, waiting for him. Then the Eighth at once broke into a gallop, and dashed on with enthusiasm. A lieutenant exclaimed, "I do hope they have a battery." And a captain said, "I wish every man of Hill's command had a cannon, for we would have them all before night." But the remnant of Hill's forces—about one hundred—made a rapid retreat from the town. The Eighth Iowa rejoined the brigade the same night, having marched forty miles.



On the 25th, Croxton moved out on the road leading to Newnan, Georgia. The next day, while crossing the Chattahoochee river, a white flag appeared on the opposite bank.

Then those soldiers heard, but with unlike emotions, of the fall of Richmond, the surrender of Lee, and the assassination of Lincoln.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON WILSON'S RAID.

1. If Wilson had moved on Selma with five or six thousand men, as first proposed, he would have found himself in the presence of Forrest with an inferior force. He undoubtedly would have diverted that able commander for a while, from any movement toward Mobile, but in doing so must have suffered considerably; and, in all probability, would have furnished another of those examples which had already become too frequent, of the poor success which attends aggressive operations with an inferior force. It was Wilson's own sagacity, as we have seen, that led to his taking a column sufficiently powerful for the task before it. Yet Colonel Dorr and other officers in his command, who had spent some time as prisoners-of-war in the South, had even two years before urged the advantage of moving *large* columns into the very heart of the confederacy; forces which would be able to cause just such widespread and irreparable injury as was inflicted by Wilson's victorious corps. Had such columns been moved into the South a year or two earlier, they would have found but slight fortifications surrounding the important towns.

2. The capture of Selma must be regarded as the most remarkable achievement in the history of modern cavalry. The valor of the troops engaged in that splendid assault, illustrates the maxim of Alexander, that "No place is impregnable to the brave nor secure to the timorous."

3. Croxton, when he rejoined Wilson, had marched six hun-

dred and fifty miles in thirty days. His command encountered many hardships, and nothing but its pluck and good soldiership brought it out so successfully. It would seem that Croxton's better course would have been to have marched northeasterly from Tuscaloosa the morning after entering that place, instead of again recrossing the Black Warrior. The critical moment was, when he was attacked by Wirt Adams, near Pleasant Ridge. The firmness of Col. Johnston and the Second Michigan there was highly exemplary. Adams made a forced march to Columbus, and got seventy miles from him. But for the stern treatment he had received from the Second Michigan, he doubtless would have followed the column when close upon its heels.

Croxton's command felt an apprehension lest they would get out of ammunition, but their supply lasted to the end. And most of the time the men were in good spirits.





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